

CHRISTIANS, SOUTH.

WELLONS.

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THE CHRISTIANS, SOUTH,  
NOT UNITARIANS IN SENTIMENT.

A REPLY TO REV. JOHN PARIS' BOOK,

ENTITLED

“UNITARIANISM EXPOSED, AS IT EXISTS  
IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH,” &c.

BY REV. W. B. WELLONS,


Editor of the “Christian Sun,” Suffolk, Va.

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Audi alteram partem.

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SUFFOLK, VA:  
OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN SUN.  
1860.



To the LOVERS of  
RELIGIOUS TRUTH, GOSPEL FREEDOM,  
AND CHRISTIAN LIBERTY, EVERYWHERE, THIS  
LITTLE BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.

## INTRODUCTION.

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“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” Thus wrote an inspired Apostle to his brethren in Rome, and the admonition is equally applicable to christians every where. The author of this little book has tried to obey the injunction of the Apostle, and to live in peace with all men; but more especially, members of the Church, and Ministers of the Gospel. I freely and candidly confess that I have no taste for religious controversy, and no disposition to contend with professed followers of Christ. I have labored during my whole ministerial career, to avoid controversy and to live in union and harmony with members and ministers of all religious denominations with whom I have been brought in contact. But with some men I have found it almost impossible to live peaceably. The Apostle knew there were such persons, and therefore did not make the command quoted imperative, but said rather, “if it be possible,” or “as much as lieth in you,” obey the command. The individual with whom I am so reluctantly drawn into controversy, has seemed to breathe continually an atmosphere charged with contention and dissension, and with members and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal and Baptist churches in North Carolina, his native state, he has been in controversy for years past, and even with his own brethren he failed to live peaceably. When his numerous controversies and personal feuds with the members of his own church, growing out of his quarrelsome disposition, had rendered him so unacceptable as a minister in his native state, that home was no more desirable, he sought and obtained a transfer to the Virginia Conference. He was soon after appointed to the Smithfield Circuit, embracing a church in the village of Chuckatuck in Nansemond county, Va., and another near the village of Sunsbury,

Gates county, N. C., which has since become extinct. These appointments were about thirty-five miles distant the one from the other, and scarcely a member of the Methodist Protestant church lived between them. Mr. Paris necessarily passed through Suffolk twice each month. He called on me, a stranger, and was welcomed to all the comforts of my humble home. He had free access to my library and prayed with my family. We had frequent conversations on matters of difference between christians of different denominations. On the very subject of controversy now between us, we conversed, and he learned from my lips, that the Christians, South, were not Unitarians in sentiment, and he never intimated to me a doubt of the correctness of my statement on this subject. I did not then know, nor did he ever intimate to me that he had ever published a book in which he had charged us with propagating Unitarian sentiments. I introduced him in my pulpit at Cypress Chapel, and he frequently shared in the hospitality of the Christian brethren in that neighborhood, and had every necessary opportunity to know that what he now affirms is without any foundation in truth. John Paris gained my confidence, and though lack of refinement was apparent in every thing about him, I loved him, because I believed him sincere and honest. His slanderous publication concerning the Christians I had never then dreamed of. The reader will not be surprised to learn that after all that has transpired, this defense is commenced with a great lack of confidence in the sincerity, honesty and truthfulness of the author of the work to be reviewed. Adder-like, he now seeks to thrust his poisonous fangs in those he once honored, whose hospitality he often shared and whose confidence he once enjoyed, but has so basely betrayed. To repel the power of the attack, and destroy the virtue of the venom thus spit at a peaceable denomination of christians, is the object aimed at in this reply. With what success the effort is attended, a discerning public must decide when the succeeding pages have been read.

## CHAPTER I.

### Origin of the Controversy.

THE *North Carolina Christian Advocate* of May 12th, 1859, contained an article signed by one *R. R. Michaux*, charging the Christians in North Carolina and Virginia with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments, and among the witnesses adduced to strengthen his position was this :

“Paris’ History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, published in 1849, says that the *Christian Sun* boldly advocates Unitarianism.”

The *Christian Sun* was published in 1849 at Pittsborough, N. C., and was edited by Rev. Daniel W. Kerr, a man with whom I was intimately acquainted, and who was never, to my knowledge, charged by friend or foe with being a Unitarian in sentiment. Rev. D. W. Kerr died in 1850, and the *Christian Sun* was removed to Raleigh, and edited by Rev. H. B. Hayes, until 1855, when it was removed to Suffolk and I became its resident editor. In the *Sun* of May 20th, 1859, I promptly and unequivocally disputed the statement made by Mr. Michaux, upon the authority of *Paris’ History*, and added : “We know nothing of Mr. Paris, and never before heard of his history, but we pronounce the statement basely false and slanderous.” This emphatic denial, called forth a private letter addressed to me by Rev. John Paris, post-marked Portsmouth, Va., and dated June 12th, 1859. In this letter he acknowledged himself the author of the history referred to, and of

the very offensive statement which I had in my indignation pronounced "basely false and slanderous." The reception of this letter greatly surprised me, for I had formed a better opinion of *Rev. John Paris of the Methodist Protestant Church*, and did not suppose him capable of such gross misrepresentation. I addressed him at Portsmouth under date of June 14th, 1859, expressing my astonishment at finding him to be the author of the slanderous statement referred to. Had the article in the *Advocate*, given his history its true title, I might have suspected him, but Mr. Michaux called it a "History of the Methodist *Episcopal* Church, instead of a History of the Methodist Protestant Church," which is its true title and character. In my private letter to him, which was afterward published in the *Sun*, this passage occurs—"I am charitable enough to suppose that you may have relied on general rumor in the vicinity where you then lived, or have been misled by some prejudiced person, and that you wrote under such influence, and were I sure of this fact, would most cheerfully give you the benefit of such an explanation." My confidence in the sincerity of Mr. Paris had not yet been destroyed, and I hoped and expected that he would make such an explanation and apology for his error as would be satisfactory to those he had injured. Judge of my surprise on opening the *Methodist Protestant* of July 9th, 1859, to find the first of a series of letters addressed to me, as editor of the *Christian Sun*, not retracting the erroneous statement made in his book and published ten years before, but a bold attempt to justify and sustain the statement then made. The series of letters, five in number, were published in the Methodist Protestant of Baltimore at intervals, far enough removed to make the last appear October 5th, 1859, nearly three

Get Books of John Paris  
1. "History of M P Ch" - 1869  
2. "Unitarianism & its opponents" 1860  
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months from the date of the first. These letters I reviewed and answered as they came from the press, in the Christian Sun, and Mr. Paris could not fail to see in my replies the many palpable errors into which he had fallen. But after seeing all, with the omission of a single paragraph, these letters are sent forth to the world in 1860 in a book of seventy-two pages entitled, "UNITARIANISM EXPOSED AS IT EXISTS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, BY BEING DISROBED OF ITS FALSE COLORINGS AND HELD UP TO THE LIGHT OF TRUTH."

1860

Paris

The letters which compose the little book bearing this long title, contained many statements varying as widely from the truth as the north and south poles, and I proved them so by testimony which he would not dare attempt to impeach; yet not one line of correction has ever appeared in the Methodist Protestant from his pen or from the pen of any one else. The unblushing falsehoods, for I need not use a softer term, remain uncorrected to this day, and what is worse, all, save one, are contained in the book before me, the title of which has been given above. I record this fact with deep and heartfelt mortification, for the reason that John Paris is a professor of the religion of Jesus, an ordained minister of the ever blessed Gospel of Christ, and once he possessed my confidence as a man of piety and truth. What a blot upon the holy calling! What a stain upon Christianity! What a stumbling-block to sinners!

The letters which compose the little volume before me, will be taken up one by one in succeeding chapters, and the erroneous statements contained in them fully exposed. Before entering upon this, however, I have some other points to present, and deem it proper to notice one statement in the "Preface" to his book.

In referring to the origin of this controversy and the cir-

cumstances which gave rise to the publication of his book,  
Mr. Paris says :

“ Mr. Michaux challenged Mr. Wellons to meet him at either of two named points to discuss the question involved in public debate. But, as the wily fox retires before the the young lion, so it was in this case. Mr. Wellons may have thought that “prudence was the better part of valor,” and therefore deemed it best to shrink from a public contest with the logical powers of the former.”

What Mr. Paris says of my refusal to meet Mr. Michaux in public debate, is intended to mislead and affect minds ignorant of the facts. I did decline noticing the challenge of R. R. Michaux, until I could be assured that he was recognized by those who knew him best, as a sane man and a gentleman. The effort to turn me away from the controversy with Mr. Paris, by pushing little Michaux before me, was wholly unsuccessful, and if R. R. Michaux blames me for not noticing him farther, he must attribute it to his own insignificance. I stated several times in the Christian Sun, that his first article, which led to the whole controversy, was only noticed because it appeared in a highly respectable journal of another denomination. It was the medium through which his statements were made that provoked a reply, and not the worth of the author of them.

Another fact should be stated in this connection. Rev. E. Y. Reese, D. D., the editor of the Methodist Protestant, endorsed the statements of Messrs. Michaux and Paris, and I challenged him to a discussion of the subject of controversy, stating the question thus : “ARE THE CHRISTIANS IN THE SOUTH UNITARIANS ?” I agreed to take the negative if he would take the affirmative, the positions which we already occupied. Dr. Reese declined entering into the discussion

because, as he said, he did not know enough of the Christians to do justice to his side of the question; the plain English of which was, that he did not have the evidence at hand to sustain himself, nor could he by any means procure it, it not being in existence. If Mr. Paris had said of the editor of the Protestant, that he considered "prudence the better part of valor," then there might have been force in it. But the backing out of E. Y. Reese, D. D., is carefully excluded from his book, and my refusal to meet a man so far inferior in every way to Dr. Reese, is heralded to the world as a triumph. I have met Rev. John Paris, and would have met Rev. E. Y. Reese, but these gentlemen cannot force me so to degrade myself as to meet R. R. Michaux in a discussion of any sort. I write thus of R. R. Michaux, not because I feel any unkindness toward him, for I really pity him more than I blame him for the position he has been made to occupy in this controversy. He has from the first, allowed himself to be made a catspaw of, by designing persons who knew their man.

## CHAPTER II.

### Principles and Practice of the Christians, South.

Before proceeding farther in the examination of Mr. Paris' book, I propose giving the Principles and Practice of the Christians, South, so that the reader may understand our true position, and the more easily discover the erroneous positions taken by the author of the little book to be reviewed.

The Christian organization in the South was at first composed almost wholly of seceders, from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The secession took place at the Conference held in Baltimore, in 1792, Rev. James O'Kelly being the moving spirit in the secession, and in the organization of the Christian Church. With the circumstances connected with the secession all persons acquainted with the History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States, are familiar. The controversy between Mr. O'Kelly and those who co-operated with him on the one side, and the Bishops and Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the other, was not on account of the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for in doctrine they were agreed; but Church Government was the bone of contention, which led to the secession and formation of a new denomination. The Christian Church, at its organization, was thoroughly Methodistic in doctrine, and three score years has caused but a slight variation in the doctrines taught by the two denominations; their manner of worship is almost precisely the same, but in government they are far apart, and are likely to continue so.

Just  
not Doctrine

NB

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For Sixty Years  
Methodist & Christian  
Similarity in

1. Doctrine  
2. Worship

But difference  
was in Govt

The leading principles which governed the Christians in 1794, when the denomination was first regularly organized, and by which they are still governed, are well known wherever they are known, viz:

1. Christ, the only head of the Church.
2. The name Christian, to the exclusion of all party, or sectarian names.
3. The Holy Bible, or the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, our only creed or confession of faith.
4. Christian character, or vital piety the true scriptural test of fellowship, or church membership.
5. The right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience, the privilege and duty of all.

According to the principles here laid down, it will be seen, that, as a denomination, they have no other creed save the written Word of God, and that the right of reading and interpreting the Word for himself is the privilege of every member of the church. Christian character is their only test of fellowship or church membership. Candidates for membership in the Church are only required to give evidence that they have been regenerated—converted—born again, by exercising repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. If satisfactory evidence is given they are received into full fellowship in the church by a vote of its members without being asked or required to express any opinion in reference to those disputed points of doctrine which divide the different denominations of believers. They are not asked any question touching their faith in the Trinity or Unity; in Calvinism or Arminianism; in Baptism by immersion, pouring or sprinkling; in adult or infant Baptism. No questions on any of these subjects are asked or answers given. The important questions are: Do you believe in Christ Jesus? Have you repented of

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your sins and exercised faith in Him as the Saviour and Redeemer of men? Have you been born again? And have you the Spirit of God bearing witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? These, or similar questions and proper answers to them are considered important and embody all that is regarded necessary. Nothing more and nothing less is required than affirmative answers to the above, or similar questions, on the part of the applicant to his acceptance into the Church.

Any one can see from the above that there cannot and need not be entire uniformity in the doctrines held and taught by the members and ministers of the Christian Church. Uniformity of opinion on all the disputed doctrines among the disputed sects, is not sought after or considered necessary to christian fellowship. Being right in the great essential doctrines of repentance, faith, conversion and a life of obedience, yielding the fruits which constitute a christian character, doctrines of less importance are disregarded so far as church union and fellowship is concerned.

No one, acquainted with the principles and practice of the Christians thus briefly given, can fail to see the injustice of taking the sentiments of one or two persons who may hold membership in the denomination, as an exposition of the views of the whole denomination. To illustrate, suppose one, two, or a dozen members of the denomination could be found holding and teaching Calvinistic sentiments, would it be fair to say the whole denomination are Calvinists in sentiment? Some of their ministers and churches practice immersion and adult baptism almost entirely, and would it be just to declare the whole denomination Baptists, while others practice sprinkling and infant baptism, and all

are left entirely free on this subject. If Rev. John Paris could find one or two members of the denomination holding some views in common with the Unitarians, would it be fair to class the whole denomination with Unitarians? Yet this is precisely what he has attempted to do. In the very issues of the Christian Sun, from which he has quoted Anti-Trinitarian sentiments, were articles advocating the doctrine of the Trinity as held and believed by the Methodist and other denominations. On the same principle and by the same train of reasoning adopted by him, he might prove the Christians Trinitarians in sentiment. But in his estimation there is no odium attached to Trinitarianism, and those articles advocating that doctrine were passed over, and that which has odium, in his estimation, attached to it is seized upon. What consistency! *What an idea of fairness!*

I have an extensive personal acquaintance with the membership of the Christian Church, South, and have been astonished to find so much union of sentiment among them, considering the free and liberal position which they occupy denominationally. Intimately acquainted as I am, and free as has been my intercourse with the members and ministers of the Christian Church, South, I have never yet met with a single person who could in truth be called a Unitarian in sentiment—not one. I have frequently, through the columns of the Sun, from the pulpit and in private, challenged the accusers of the denomination to produce the name of one in all the Southern country, who would acknowledge or declare himself a Unitarian in sentiment, but not *one* name has yet been announced. This fact is significant in the present controversy, and should not be lost sight of at any time.

### CHAPTER III.

## The Christians North.

It is also proper before entering upon an examination of the strange position of Rev. John Paris, that the position occupied by the Northern branch of the Christian Church should be plainly stated, together with the proper relation existing between the two branches of the family bearing the same family name, the Southern and Northern Christians.

The Christians in New England were originally seceders from the Calvinistic Baptist Church. They came out upon the same general platform a few years after Rev. James O'Kelly seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South, and without any knowledge whatever of the existence of Mr. O'Kelly and his brethren in the South, or the platform of religious principles which they had adopted. Dr. Abner Jones, of Vermont, was the leading spirit in the secession from the Baptists in New England, and the establishment of that branch of the Christian Church.

About the same time a secession from the Presbyterian Church took place in the West, who organized and adopted the same general platform of principles first adopted by those who seceded from the Methodists in the South, and afterward by those who seceded from the Baptists in New England. The leader in this secession was Rev. Barton W. Stone, of Kentucky, who, at the time, knew nothing whatever of the New England and Southern secessions. ? \*

On the 1st of September, 1808, Rev. Elias Smith, one of the ministers who left the Baptists in New England, and

\* Rice Haggard worked with O'Kelly & was an associate

helped to form the Christian Church in that section, commenced the publication of the "*Herald of Gospel Liberty*," a semi-monthly religious newspaper at Portsmouth, N. H. This paper earnestly advocated and defended the principles of the new organization, and was the first religious newspaper published in this or any other country. Copies of this paper found their way through the post-office into Kentucky and Virginia, and those who were called Christians in the West and in the South, were astonished to find a similar organization in the East, and up to this time, the Western and Southern branches knew nothing of each other. A correspondence was opened through the "Herald of Gospel Liberty" between the three divisions, of what seemed to be the same family, which continued for sometime, and resulted in a nominal union between them. An interchange of ministerial visits followed, and much good feeling existed between the three branches, of what now seemed to be but one denomination. The denomination spread with great rapidity, and soon churches were established in nearly all the States of the Union, and in Canada and New Brunswick. About 1820, a "United States Conference" was proposed, the object of which was to bring about a more general co-operation between the different branches of the denomination. One or two meetings of the kind were held, which were not generally attended, and the effort to perpetuate the meetings of this body failed. In 1848 and 1849, the proposition for general co-operation was renewed, and in October, 1850, a "General Christian Convention" was organized at Marion, N. Y. At this meeting the three branches of the denomination were represented by chosen delegates from the different Conferences of the States. At the second meeting of this body, which convened in Cincinnati,

X/1850 Convention Attended  
by delegates from the three  
branches present. Pres.

✓ Ohio, in October, 1854, a separation took place on the slavery question. I was present as a representative from the South at this and the previous meeting, and participated in the proceedings, which led to the separation. The Southern branch of the denomination considered itself aggrieved in the action of the Convention in reference to slavery, and withdrew, declaring that they would no longer attempt to co-operate with the other branches of the denomination. Thus the Christians were divided into the Northern and Southern branches. A Southern Christian Convention was organized in September, 1856, at Union Chapel, Alamance county, N. C., and at present there is no general co-operation between the Christians North and the Christians South, and the Christians South have declared that they will not in any way hold themselves responsible for any action or teaching of the Christians North. NB

✓ All the churches in the Christian Church, both North and South, are organized on the congregational plan, hence, every church is considered an independent body. The churches thus organized, co-operate together by means of Annual Conferences, in the general enterprizes of the denomination. During the time the Christians North and South co-operated, one section did not consider itself bound by the action and teachings of the other, their co-operation consisting mainly in publishing and educational enterprizes, nor is one church or minister now bound by the teachings of another. This is in strict accordance with the principles of their organization. The right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience is held sacred by all, and yet there is much uniformity of sentiment existing among them. NB

But to the main question which I have been thus long approaching. Are the Northern Christians generally Uni-

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tarians in sentiment? My long familiarity with their writings and personal acquaintance with so large a number of their ministers and laymen, justifies me in saying *they are not*. The main body of the denomination in the North believe firmly in the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ; but with the same candor, I admit that there are some ministers and laymen in the North that wear the family name, who, in sentiment, approach very near Unitarianism, and a few who avow themselves Unitarians in sentiment. I may mention the name of Rev. Eli Fay, who, by his ultraism on this subject, has gained considerable notoriety both in the North and in the South. For the course pursued, and the doctrines taught by this eccentric aspirant for public attention, the Christians in the South are in no way responsible, and I am happy to find the main body of the Northern Christians denouncing them.

## CHAPTER IV.

# The Unitarians.

What is Unitarianism? Who are Unitarians? And what are their peculiarities in doctrine and practice? I have concluded that a truthful and correct answer to these questions will be proper before entering into an examination of the charge of Unitarianism preferred against the Christians by Rev. John Paris.

I prefer to let every denomination of christians speak, as far as possible, for itself in reference to its articles of faith and practice. In Winebrenner's "History of all Religious Denominations," Rev. Alvan Lamson, a Unitarian minister of Dedham, Mass., who prepared the history of his own denomination for Mr. Winebrenner, says :

"They began to exist as a separate and distinct class or denomination about 1815 in New England." See pages 586 and 587.

In this he has reference to American Unitarianism.

Of their faith or peculiar doctrines he says :

"The Father is the only proper object of supreme worship and love." Page 579.

"Unitarians of the present day, as far as we know, do not think it lawful directly to address Christ in prayer." Page 581.

In reference to the character of Christ, he says :

"Some hold his pre-existence, and others suppose that his existence commenced at the time of his entrance into the world." Page 582.

In the article from which these quotations are made, the Divine nature of Christ is no where admitted. He says :

“The question of his nature they do not consider as important.” Page 582.

In a summary of Unitarian doctrines recently published for circulation in the West, said to be endorsed by Rev. H. W. Bellows, D. D., the noted Unitarian minister of New York, it is said, in reference to Jehovah :

“We believe as the one God and Father of all. He only is entitled to worship.”

Again—

✓ “All prayer should be offered to the Father through the Son.”

Watson, in his Theological Dictionary, says :

“The chief article in the religious system of the Unitarians is, that Christ was a mere man.”

Of course, those who hold and teach such doctrines, are Anti-Trinitarians. Hence, the great Lexicographer, Webster, in defining the term Unitarian, says :

“One who denies the doctrine of the Trinity and ascribes Divinity to God the Father only.”

And Johnson and Walker defines Unitarian thus :

“One of a sect allowing Divinity to God the Father alone.”

On some other points of doctrine the Unitarians differ from most other denominations, and on many points of doctrine they are agreed with others. But the above quotations show plainly the distinguishing points of doctrine held by the Unitarians, and tell us what Unitarianism is, and

✓ who are Unitarians. Now comes the important inquiry: Do the Christians in the South hold and teach the peculiar doctrines of the Unitarians? Are they Unitarians in sentiment? ✓ Rev. John Paris says they *do*, and I say they *do not*. He says the Christians South *are* Unitarians in sentiment, and I say they *are not*. This is the question of controversy between us. In succeeding chapters I shall notice critically the evidence adduced by him to sustain his position, and fear not the result of this examination with all candid and unprejudiced minds.

## CHAPTER V.

### Reply to Letter No. 1.

57 In the *Methodist Protestant* of July 9th, 1859, the first letter of Rev. John Paris appeared, and it is copied verbatim in his book. This letter I replied to in the *Christian Sun*, of July 15th. The substance of this letter is embodied in what follows.

✓ After introducing the subject by stating the substance of our private correspondence referred to in Chapter I, Mr. Paris enquires "what is Unitarianism?" and says, "Let others besides Wellons and Paris answer the question." He then quotes Webster as defining the word Unitarian, "One who denies the doctrine of the Trinity and ascribes Divinity to God the Father only," and Watson who says, "The chief article in the religious system of the Unitarians is that Christ was a mere man." He then enquires, "Were such doctrines as the preceding boldly advocated in the *Christian Sun* prior to the penning of the statement in question, which was July, 1849," and answers, "Oh! yes, undoubtedly."

On what ground is this answer given? What evidence of its truth is presented? The only evidence adduced is an article from the pen of M. B. Barrett, published in the *Sun* of June 1st, 1849. Let it be known that M. B. Barrett was then a mere boy, and not a minister of the gospel. The article referred to from the pen of young Barrett was, it seems, the third of a series to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and not the very God whose Son he is.

To establish this position a number of passages of Scripture were quoted and some arguments adduced. He (M. B. Barrett) further stated that he did not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity as presented in the creeds, and quoted from a discourse delivered by Rev. W. R. Stowe, in Portsmouth, on the first article of faith in the Methodist Discipline, in which he (Stowe) showed from Milnor, a Trinitarian historian, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now taught and believed, was not established as an article of faith in the church, and believed until A. D. 381, when the famous council of Constantinople met, which was composed of three hundred and fifty confused and disorderly members. This is the substance of the article copied from the Sun of June 1st, 1849, written by M. B. Barrett, then a mere boy, and for which he alone was responsible; it appearing in the paper as a communication and without a word of endorsement by the editor or any one else. This letter, the substance of which I have faithfully quoted, Mr. Paris introduces as proof that "Unitarianism was boldly advocated in the Christian Sun" in 1849, and this is the only proof, and because I disputed his position he gets into such a dreadful pet.

I am under no obligation to endorse or reject the sentiments of young Barrett, but as he is the only witness introduced I propose an examination of his sentiments, and to enquire if they are essentially Unitarian. Unitarianism, as defined by Mr. Paris, according to the authors quoted by him, is "a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity—ascribing Divinity to God the Father only—believing Christ a mere man." Does M. B. Barrett do this? He disputes the doctrine that God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ is one person, and so far denies the Trinita-

rian doctrine. But does he deny the Divinity of Christ, and ascribe Divinity to God the Father only? Does he speak of Christ as a mere man? No man can read his article and answer these questions in the affirmative. There is no proof whatever in the article of M. B. Barrett that he denies or disbelieves the Divinity of Christ, or believes Him a mere man—not one particle. And let it be remembered that a denial of Christ's Divinity, and believing Him a mere man, is the very essence of Unitarianism—that which gives to it all its odium. The truth is, M. B. Barrett did then, does now, and ever has believed in the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the article reviewed he may have used language too dogmatical for a boy, but it is clear that he *did not teach Unitarianism*, and that is the point I wish to establish. But to put this question beyond all doubt, I quote from a reply to the strictures of Mr. Paris, by Rev. M. B. Barrett, in the Christian Sun of September 16th, 1859. He says:

“I am not a Unitarian in sentiment. Mr. Paris' assertions to the contrary. I believe in the Unity of God and the Divinity of Christ.”

And in a communication in the Sun of Sept. 30th, 1859 he says.—

“I am not a Unitarian in sentiment and never have been.”

Now, no man who knows M. B. Barrett will charge him with lack of independence in avowing his sentiments, whether popular or unpopular, and no one who knows the strength of his intellect will, for a moment, believe him incapable of knowing what he believes, and what doctrine he teaches. Looking at the whole subject I am compelled

to reiterate the declaration first made in the Sun on this subject, that the charge is "basely false and slanderous." If it sounds harsh to Mr. Paris I cannot help it. If, as he says, it savors not of my "well known urbanity," I have only to say the slander should never have been published. Unitarianism has never been advocated in the Christian Sun, either when controlled by the lamented and sainted Kerr, his immediate successor, or its present editor.

But one would suppose, from the reading of the statement of Mr. Paris, in his history, page 410, that not only one or many of the contributors to the columns of the Christian Sun, in 1849, were advocating Unitarianism, but that this was the main object of the publication of the Sun. He failed to state the fact that *one* contributor denied the doctrine of the Trinity, and that he inferred that he must be a Unitarian, but with a bold sweep of the pen sets down the Sun as a bold advocate of Unitarianism. Had he stated the fact and have drawn his own inference, then I should only censure his judgment, but as it is I cannot avoid censuring his sincerity and honesty. But let me advance a step farther and place the whole facts before the public. Rev. D. W. Kerr, the Editor of the Christian Sun in 1849, was a Trinitarian in sentiment, known to be such by all and so acknowledged by Mr. Paris himself. But after this acknowledgment he seeks to cast all the odium attached to Unitarianism upon him by saying "I never saw one solitary note of condemnation from him" of the views of his correspondent. The policy pursued by Mr. Kerr in conducting the Sun was to let every writer and member of the Christian Church speak for himself, advocate his own peculiar views on all subjects, and be responsible for his own productions. I never knew him to con-

trovert the opinions of any of his correspondents. He fully and freely accorded to every member of the church, the high privilege of expressing his convictions of right—his honest sentiments upon every subject, and of exercising his own right of private judgment on all questions. Mr. Paris seems not to know how to appreciate the position of the good Kerr, nor is it strange that he should manifest ignorance on this subject. He has always been bound by a man-made creed, has never breathed a free atmosphere, and knows nothing of its privileges or pleasures.

The braggardism contained in the conclusion of this letter received a fitting rebuke in the columns of the Sun which need not be repeated here.

Before closing this chapter I wish to notice another statement contained in Mr. Paris' History, page 410. He says, in speaking of the Southern Christians:

“There is a union or fraternal relation of some kind existing between them and the Unitarians in the North, which union was consummated about 1839.”

This statement is like much else that Mr. Paris has written. *There is not one word of truth in it.* This also may sound harsh, but he should have been more guarded in his declarations and have obtained more correct information before attempting to write a book. There never was any sort of union or fraternal relation formed between the Christians in the South and the Unitarians in the North, either in 1839, or any other year. The declaration is without any foundation, in truth, palpably false in every particular.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Reply to Letter No. 2.

The second letter of Mr. Paris first appeared in the Methodist Protestant of October 8th, 1859. I shall proceed to a full examination of the evidence adduced by him in this letter to prove the Christians Unitarians.

The first and only witness introduced is Leonard Prather, of whom he says:

“Rev. Leonard Prather, of North Carolina, the friend and pupil of Rev. James O’Kelley, who was for many years a minister of the ‘Christian Church,’ and one of the most learned and eloquent preachers of which it could boast, wrote a historical document as a defence of Mr. O’Kelley and the church in which he died, and which was published in the ‘Mutual Rights’ in 1828 at the instance of ‘several members of the Christian Church.’ This learned gentleman then held the following language:

“ ‘Some years after the organization of this (the Christian) Church, a sect sprang up in New England, who are strictly Unitarians, also calling themselves the ‘Christian Church.’ They published a paper entitled, ‘The Herald of Gospel Liberty,’ edited by Elias Smith, in which they deny the Divinity of Christ, and ridicule the doctrine of the atonement.’

“Seventeen or eighteen years past, a missionary by the name of Plummer was sent from this body, who attended a general meeting of the Christian Church (at Pine Stake, North Carolina.) Mr. O’Kelley asked him, ‘if Jesus Christ were now on earth, and you knew it were He, would you worship him?’ He answered, ‘No, no sooner than I would you, for I do not believe he was any more divine.’ Mr. O’Kelley replied, ‘Then I have no fellowship for you.’ He

was a man of insinuating address. He drew off Mr. Wm. Guiry, a man of ingenuity and eloquence, and they proselyted some of the most numerous and respectable societies in Virginia, and every traveling preacher at that time in connection with Mr. O'Kelley, with some local preachers and a few members, and two or three preachers in the State, (N. Carolina.) There is no intercourse between these churches. Those who remained firm in their first doctrines, refused all fellowship with this heterodox party, and viewed them as refined infidels, infinitely more dangerous than the disciples of Voltaire, Rosseau, or Paine."

The declarations of Leonard Prather given above in full, are relied upon for so many charges, that I shall examine them somewhat closely, and show that they are *false* in every particular.

I propose first to examine the character of the witness, and then his evidence. Who was Leonard Prather, that Mr. Paris represents as "the friend and pupil of James O'Kelley?" And as one of the "most learned and eloquent" ministers the Christians ever had? And whose testimony he vauntingly says "no man will gainsay?" Answers shall be given.

Leonard Prather commenced his public life as a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Soon after Mr. O'Kelley's secession and the organization of the Christian Church, Mr. Prather became associated with him, and preached for a while among the Christians. He left the Christians and joined the Presbyterians, preaching a while with that denomination. He then left the Presbyterians and joined the Primitive Baptists, and was immersed by a minister of that denomination. While with that denomination he preached election and reprobation in its most objectionable form. But he soon changed again, and associated

himself with the Free Will Baptists. From this latter denomination he came back to the Christians, passed through Eastern Virginia as a Christian minister, and stopped to preach at Cypress Chapel, spending his time while there with a venerable member of that church, and while his host was temporarily out of the house, got into his sideboard and drank so much apple brandy, that on reaching the church he was seized with a fit of vomiting ere he entered the pulpit, and so disgusted the congregation that they left, and he was hauled back to his temporary home beastly drunk. Respectable gentlemen, now living in Nansemond county, were eye-witnesses to this disgusting affair. From Eastern Virginia he made his way through North Carolina, and in a drunken debauch in the city of Raleigh, attempted to commit suicide by cutting his throat with a knife or razor, from which a frightful gash and ugly scar were left, which followed him to the grave. He was expelled from the Christian Church, and it was after his expulsion that he wrote the letter to the "Mutual Rights," from which Mr. Paris quotes. Fired with revenge toward the Christians who had expelled him from their fellowship for such gross immorality, he sought to injure them by misrepresenting them to the world through the Mutual Rights. In 1833, five years after writing his famous letter to the Mutual Rights, professing reformation, he applied to the North Carolina and Virginia Conference for membership again in the Christian Church. The Conference was held that year at Kedar, in Warren county. His petition was referred to a judicious committee, of which Rev. D. W. Kerr was chairman. They advised that the petition be rejected, not having confidence in the sincerity of the man, and he was unanimously rejected. The succeeding year Rev. Alfred Apple and

Thomas J. Drumwright, then just commencing to preach, were appointed to what was then called the Surry Circuit in Virginia. In the month of May, Prather came down in Virginia and commenced preaching as a Christian minister, announcing that he had been sent down by the brethren in North Carolina to "kill off Unitarianism," which he declared existed in Virginia. Messrs. Apple and Drumwright knowing his character, refused to associate with him, and he immediately commenced a warfare against them, especially the latter, who had stated that he was preaching as a Christian minister without any license from the church. This resulted in bringing to light his true character, and he was silenced. Ere the meeting of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, in 1834, he joined the Methodist Protestant Church, and was by that denomination licensed to preach. At the meeting of the Christian Conference at New Providence Chapel, Orange county, (now Alamance,) N. C., in December, 1834, the Conference passed a resolution at the suggestion of a committee composed of J. H. Bland, J. T. Petty and John Walker, to publish the said Prather as an imposter in the *American Beacon*, of Norfolk. On the 22d of January, 1835, the following card appeared in the Beacon :

*To all whom it may concern :*

MR. LEONARD PRATHER, who is now traveling at large as a minister of the Gospel, in the State of Virginia and elsewhere, exhibiting certain certificates and documents purporting to have been obtained from the General Meeting of the Christian Church: We therefore proclaim to the public at large, that whatever papers or documents the said Prather may have had at any time heretofore, his conduct has been

unchristian and ungodly, and we consequently disclaim and reject him. Signed in behalf of the General Meeting.

WM. HOLT, Moderator.

JOHN A. MINNIS, Sec'y.

*Providence M. H., Orange Co., N. C., Dec. 20, 1834.*

This card was continued in the next eight succeeding issues of that paper, was re-inserted February the 20th, and continued for ten successive issues.

Soon after this exposition of his character, death put an end to the inglorious career of Leonard Prather. This is the man that Rev. John Paris introduces to prove the Christians Unitarians, and who, he says, in his publication, now being reviewed, page 48—"With me, he is altogether as reliable as W. B. Wellons." What a bad cause must that be which requires such a witness to sustain it!

When I first laid the above facts before the public in the Sun of November 4th, 1859, Mr. Paris most positively denied it in the Methodist Protestant of December 24th, 1859, and stated that he had "taken the pains to examine a file of the American Beacon from the 1st of January 1834 to the 31st of December, 1836, and nothing of the kind, or *even semblance of the kind*, (referring to the card of exposure,) was found," charging me with "invading the sanctity of the grave, and hyena-like, preying upon the dead." In the Sun of January 20th, 1860, I gave the card of exposure, copied from the *American Beacon*, with the dates of publication, and called upon him to correct his error and false accusations against me through the paper in which he had given currency to the charge. Did he do it? He did not. And though he has expunged that particular part of his letter from the letter published in his book, yet

he has never intimated to the readers of the Methodist Protestant that he had erred. Can a man who would act thus be honest? Is there any religion in such conduct? The heart of John Paris shows its deep corruption and total depravity in this act, and without any thing else, this act alone ought to sink him forever with all honorable men.

Having examined the character of the witness introduced, I now propose to give his evidence a passing notice and show that it is just what might be expected from such an unreliable witness—such a depraved character. Mr. Paris in introducing the evidence of this *model* witness, in *his* estimation, raises his voice, and in evident ecstasy, says:—

“And I invite the impartial attention, both of the clergy and laity of every christian denomination in the States of Virginia and North Carolina, to the truthfulness of these weighty circumstances as detailed in consecutive order.”

In this I join with Mr. Paris, and invite all honest persons to read first the character of the witness and then the examination of his evidence.

He (Leonard Prather) first says:

“Some years after the organization of this (the Christian) Church, a sect sprang up in New England who are strictly Unitarians, also calling themselves the “Christian Church.” They published a paper entitled “The Herald of Gospel Liberty,” edited by Elias Smith, in which they deny the Divinity of Christ and ridicule the doctrine of the atonement.”

In this statement facts are entirely misrepresented. The “Herald of Gospel Liberty” was commenced in September, 1808. Rev. Elias Smith was its first editor and founder. I have now in my library the first and second volumes of this paper, containing all the numbers issued from Sept. 1st, 1808, to Oct. 12th, 1810, and have ex-

amined them carefully and have not been able to discover one word denying the Divinity of Christ or ridiculing the doctrine of the atonement. Nor is the doctrine of the Trinity denied. Any friend of Mr. Paris is at liberty to examine the volumes of the "Herald of Gospel Liberty" referred to, and see for himself that this witness testifies falsely.

In answer to the query of Mr. Paris, page 19, "Did the Christians or the Unitarians publish that paper?" I answer, the Christians. The Unitarians did not come into existence as a separate and distinct denomination in New England until seven years after the commencement of this paper.

I pass to the next point in the evidence of Leonard Prather, already quoted in the commencement of this chapter, charging that the introduction of Unitarianism led to a division of the Christian Church in the South in 1810. The reader is requested to turn back and read the whole paragraph taken from page 19, of Mr. Paris' book.

The division which occurred in the Christian Church, South, referred to, was not on account of a difference of sentiment in reference to the character of Christ, but in reference to the mode of water baptism. For the truth of this declaration I append a certificate from Rev. Mills Barrett, now living, whose testimony no man will doubt for a single moment.

"ISLE OF WIGHT, Va., Oct. 24th, 1859.

BRO. WELLONS:—At your request I will state that I was present in 1810, when a division occurred between the Christians in the South, which led to the organization of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference. It was in the second year of my ministry. The cause of the division

was the mode and subjects of water baptism, and not the introduction of Unitarianism, as stated by Rev. John Paris, on the authority of Leonard Prather. To my own certain knowledge every Christian minister in the General Meeting of 1810, when the division occurred, was a Trinitarian. I had never then heard the doctrine of the Trinity denied by anybody. The statement of Mr. Paris, made on the authority of Leonard Prather, filled me with astonishment.

Truly yours,

MILLS BARRETT."

Notice the points in this case. Rev. Mills Barrett says he was present at the meeting when the division occurred, was then a minister, and the cause of the division was the mode and subjects of water baptism, and to his own knowledge every minister in the meeting was a Trinitarian.— Could facts be stated with more explicitness? And to verify this statement I would farther state that I have in my possession the private diary of the late Rev. Joshua Livesay, of Suffolk, who was also in the General Meeting of 1810, fully corroborating all that Rev. Mills Barrett has said in his card. I also have before me a publication from the pen of Rev. James O'Kelley, of that very date, showing the grounds of division to be a difference of opinion in reference to the subjects and mode of water baptism. Besides this it should still be borne in mind that Unitarianism had assumed no organized form even in New England at that time. Thus it will be seen that Mr. Paris' witness has testified falsely in this case. Testimony of this fact could not be clearer.

But, farther, the name of a Mr. Plummer is given by Leonard Prather, as having been sent from New England as a Missionary to the South, and of a conversation held

All up Brown Ward

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1810  
Gen  
Meet

\* Was Pine Stake in NC  
or in Orange Co., VA?

between him and Rev. James O'Kelley, at ~~Pine~~ <sup>Stake</sup> Stake, N. C., in which he is represented as saying to Mr. O'Kelley, "If Jesus Christ were on earth I would not worship him any sooner than you, for I do not believe him any more divine."

This is wholly a fabrication. Rev. Frederick Plummer, from New England, did visit Virginia about 1812, after the division, but during his visit he never met with Mr. O'Kelley, nor was he ever in that part of North Carolina where Mr. O'Kelley resided. I have the authority of the Rev. Mills Barrett for saying that <sup>Plummer</sup> his visit was after the division occurred, and that he never saw Mr. O'Kelley during his stay in the South. And, farther, Mr. Plummer kept a regular diary from the commencement to the close of his ministry. That diary is now in the possession of his nephew, Rev. Charles H. Plummer, now of Providence, R. I., who is preparing it for publication, and I have his authority for saying that no mention is made in it of any interview between him and Mr. O'Kelley during his visit to the South. I feel fully authorized, from the facts above recited, to pronounce this part of Leonard Prather's evidence a fabrication from beginning to end.

No! This fabrication, as I have abundantly proved it to be, is called by Mr. Paris "a tremendous circumstance," and he says of it, "it is testimony which no man will gainsay." He therefore proceeds to lay down the position that the Christians, South, were divided in 1810, on the question of Unitarianism, "the Unitarians going with Mr. Plummer, and the Trinitarians with Mr. O'Kelley," and upon this he builds his temple. Having shown that the whole foundation is unsound and false, the temple must of necessity fall.

Having concluded my examination of the character and

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evidence of Mr. Paris' principal witness, the one relied upon more than all others, I may be permitted to express the hope, for the sake of the living Mr. Paris, that the dead Mr. Prather has not been misrepresented by him. It has given me no pleasure thus to dissect poor Leonard Prather, but the task has been forced upon me, truth demanded it and the duty has been performed. If Mr. Prather's family connections, still living, feel mortified at the exposure, they should blame Mr. Paris and not me.

Alexander M & Caird

The next point presented in the second letter of Mr. Paris, on page 20, of his book, is that Rev. W. R. Stowe preached a sermon in Portsmouth, Va., which was reviewed by Rev. A. McCaine, in the Methodist Protestant, over the signature of "Athanasius," and this sermon is said to have been a "Unitarian production."

Really, Mr. Paris is a most reckless man in his statements. Rev. W. R. Stowe never preached any sermon in Portsmouth which was reviewed by Rev. A. McCaine, in the Protestant. He delivered a discourse on the first article in the Methodist Discipline, and afterward published it in pamphlet form, but it was never reviewed by any one. He subsequently published a pamphlet entitled "Sound Doctrine," which was reviewed by Rev. Mr. McCaine, in the Methodist Protestant.

I do not regard this contradiction of much importance farther than to show that Rev. John Paris pays but little regard to *correctness* in his published statements. His recklessness and trifling with facts is wholly inexcusable, to say the very best of it.

Mr. Paris next informs the public, on page 21, of his book, that "after much wooing and cooing, courting and planning," a union was formed about 1839, between the

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Dr. McIlwain says that from 1810 to 1841  
the Northern Conf Chs were not cooperating  
with no general body & these, but in 1841  
became reunited  
with gen body.

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Christians North and the Christians South, and the platform  
of principles upon which the denomination now stands was  
adopted. The Northern Christians being considered Uni-  
tarians, and the Southern Christians, Trinitarians.

What a perversion of facts! The division which occurred  
among the Christians in Virginia and North Carolina, was  
not healed until 1841, when the "North Carolina and Vir-  
ginia Conference" became again united with the general  
body of the denomination. I have now before me the cor-  
respondence which took place between Rev. D. W. Kerr,  
of the North Carolina and Virginia Conference, and Rev.  
Joseph Marsh, Editor of the Christian Palladium, then  
published at Union Mills, N. Y., and at that time the main  
organ of the Christians in the North and in the South. In  
this correspondence there is not the most remote allusion to  
Trinitarianism or Unitarianism. The two branches came  
together on the general principles first espoused by the de-  
nomination, and what Mr. Paris sets down as a new plat-  
form then adopted had been adopted forty years before, and  
had been acted upon during all that time. In this union  
the old controversy on baptism ceased—was buried, and  
the severed body came together on the original platform  
adopted by the fathers at the organization of the church.  
Look at these facts and then tell me, kind reader, in all  
candor, what reliance can be placed in the reckless state-  
ments of John Paris.

The last circumstance mentioned by Mr. Paris, in his  
second letter, to establish his position, is that when this  
union was consummated in 1841, between the two Christian  
parties in the South, that eight ministers withdrew from the  
Christian Church, and with them five churches in Virginia  
and North Carolina. The names of the ministers given are

Re; Union of N. & S. Southern Chs  
about 1841

1810

J. D. Berryman, E. T. Berryman, R. W. Berryman, J. G. Martin, N. J. Barham, Thos. J. Drumwright, J. Lambeth and R. R. Prather. With most of these gentlemen I have long been acquainted, and know that facts are again grossly misrepresented. Rev. N. J. Barham withdrew from the Christian Conference in 1836, five years before the union alluded to was formed and before it was agitated. The cause of his leaving was a personal difference between him and one of its members. Being intimately acquainted with him about that time, I speak knowingly when I say that Unitarianism had nothing whatever to do with his leaving the Christian Church. Rev. Thomas J. Drumwright left the Christians several years after the union was formed and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. He now resides in Sussex county, Va., and I have his permission to say that Unitarianism had nothing whatever to do with his leaving the Christian Church. With Rev. E. T. Berryman I was intimately acquainted in 1839 and 1840, the year before the union was formed. He preached, during those years, at many of the churches set down by Mr. Paris as Unitarian Churches, and though much in his company I never heard him utter a word against them on account of any supposed heresy existing among them. He labored with them, shared their hospitality, received their offerings, and if not satisfied with them was not heard to express it.

With J. D. Berryman, R. W. Berryman, and the others, I have never had any personal acquaintance. But this much I know, if they fled from a Unitarian monster, it was one which existed in their own imagination. The churches under their influence, weak and small in numbers, went with them.

It should be borne in mind that the Christians, South,

*What were those  
churches?*

had no paper of their own until 1844, when the publication of the Christian Sun was commenced. The Christian Palladium was read extensively in the South, but not in the bounds of the "North Carolina and Virginia Conference," with which the Messrs. Berryman and others were connected, hence it was not a difficult matter for designing men to so misrepresent the Christians of other conferences as to mislead such men as the Messrs. Berryman and others—good men we believe, but known by all who know them as weak men, intellectually. What an excellent agent Mr. Paris would have made in misleading such men! It is almost a pity that he had not then ascertained the fact that he never could be made President of the North Carolina Methodist Protestant Conference, or he might have taken some hand in the work of misleading the well-meaning men mentioned above.

Thus it will be seen that another "tremendous circumstance," as Mr. Paris calls it, falls to the ground.

In closing my reply to this second letter, I confess that my sympathies are excited for my opponent. He must feel bad; I am sorry for him, but cannot help him out of his pitiable condition. The truth must come. I most earnestly pray that he may repent of his folly, turn to the right ways of the Lord and become a better man in future.

\* *Christian Palladium read  
extensively in the S., but not  
in the NCVA Conf*

## CHAPTER VII.

### Reply to Letter No. 3.

In the Methodist Protestant of October 22d, 1859, the third letter of Mr. Paris was published. It was dated September 28th, so between the second and third letters there was an interval of two months and nineteen days. He had time enough in the preparation of this letter to re-write, correct and improve it, until it should be free from gross errors, but like those which have preceded it, it has been prepared in the most reckless manner. A false foundation is laid, and upon it a theory unsound and untruthful is erected. All the points in this letter are dependent upon the false statements of Leonard Prather, whose character and evidence is so fully exposed in the preceding chapter. In this letter Leonard Prather is again alluded to as "one of the most learned theologians of whom the Christian Church could boast." He was never regarded a strong man in the Christian Church, even before his fall. But the reader must see Mr. Paris' object in thus complimenting and commending such an unworthy man. He knew at the time he penned this letter that Leonard Prather was wholly unreliable and without the least claim to honesty and truthfulness. Thus has fallen to the ground, at the touch of truth, the whole fabric which he had commenced to build—the whole charge of Unitarianism against the Christians arranged with some show of ingenuity by the Portsmouth Teacher.

I am charged on page 28 with denying that any union existed between the Northern and Southern Christians, and

yet claiming that in the Herald of Gospel Liberty the Christians had the honor of starting the first religious newspaper ever published. This is another statement without any foundation in truth. I have never denied the existence of such a co-operation. Never. This is an open, barefaced fabrication. I will not allow my pen to write a harsher word now, though its honest old point seems much inclined to do it. I have denied the existence of any union between the Christians South and the Unitarians North, but not between the Christians South and North.

But Mr. Paris is continually representing the Christians North as Unitarians, and because the Christians South once co-operated with them, they too are numbered with the Unitarians. Does Mr. Paris suppose that the readers of his book are so ignorant as not to see his object? I have never denied but that there are a few who bear the name Christian in the North, who hold sentiments approaching near to Unitarianism, but the number is *small* compared with the whole body. Does not Mr. Paris know that in New England, Unitarianism is the prevailing doctrine, and all denominations are more or less influenced by Unitarian teachings? I give below a resolution passed at the last session of the "Maine Eastern Christian Conference," held in September, 1859:

"*Resolved*, That we, as a religious body, have no fellowship with the following doctrines: Unitarianism, Universalism, Modern Come-Outerism, Annihilation, Restoration, &c."

Can Mr. Paris understand this? Will he still continue to declare that the whole Northern branch of the Christian Church are Unitarians? Alas! he sins grievously in thus  
 tness against his neighbor.

*bearing false witness*

*Denial by Mellors that Unitarian  
doctrines have ever been taught  
by ministers connected with the S. Ch.*

Allusion is made in this letter to Freese's History of the Christian Church, and the remark made by him that "as a body, they generally reject the doctrine of the Trinity," and this is presented as proof of Unitarianism. This point will be fully discussed in a succeeding chapter. I will only now remark that Dr. Freese was a Northern man, and his history was written under Northern influence.

But I am told in conclusion (page 33) by Mr. Paris, that—

"Some of your ministers (thank God only a few) have thought and propagated doctrines called Socinian, Unitarian," &c.

I do not deny that doctrines preached by Christian ministers in the South have been "*called*" Socinian, Unitarian, &c.; but not by wise and good persons, but by just such designing men as John Paris and his brother Michaux of North Carolina—men unscrupulous enough to assert any thing that suits their convenience and interest, and with consciences hardened enough to stick to it after asserting it.

*\** I do deny that Socinian or Unitarian doctrines have ever been taught by ministers connected with the Southern branch of the Christian Church. Paris says, "*only a few,*" I say none, and defy him or any other man to produce one who will acknowledge his belief in the doctrines of the Socinians or Unitarians. I have repeatedly called for one name, but not one has ever been given. *✓*

Rev. Jesse K. Cole has been frequently alluded to by Mr. Paris in his letters, and by some of the lesser lights that figure in the columns of the Methodist Protestant of Baltimore. He has been called by them a Unitarian, and his peculiar views touching the inherent depravity of man, have been severely criticised by them. I knew Mr. Cole

intimately. He was a minister in the Methodist Protestant Church before he became connected with the Christian Church. I knew him and heard him preach while he was a member of the Methodist Protestant Church, and after he joined the Christian Church. His peculiar views in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity and the inherent depravity of man, underwent no change after his connection with the Christian Church. His views were precisely the same when a member of the Methodist Protestant Church as they were after he joined the Christian Church. Is it not strange that he was never charged with heresy until after he joined the Christian Church? The truth is, this cry of heresy by Mr. Paris and his lesser lights, is all sheer hypocrisy. Mr. Cole was a godly man—a man full of the Holy Ghost, and he preached with great success among the Christians, notwithstanding he held some sentiments not generally endorsed by the denomination, or by any individual member of the denomination that we have heard of. Thousands will rise up in the great day of eternity to call him blessed. I remember hearing Rev. Rufus T. Heflin, D. D., editor of the North Carolina Christian Advocate, who was converted among the Christians, and under the efficient ministerial labors of Rev. Jesse K. Cole, say, on one occasion, that he should always thank God that he was ever permitted to hear the voice of Mr. Cole.

On page 31 of his book, and in this third letter, Mr. Paris in commenting upon the Christian platform of principles, asks me the following question :

*“ Does your platform receive and hold the doctrine of the Unitarians as it holds the doctrine of the Trinitarians?”*

This question is italicised by the author, and addressing

himself to me, he says—"Give us a clear and candid answer on this point."

Before answering the question proposed, Mr. Paris will allow me to propose a similar question to him concerning his church creed. *Does the Methodist Protestant creed receive and hold Anti-Trinitarian doctrine as it does Trinitarian doctrine?* Will he give a candid answer to this?

And now, in answer to the question propounded to me with so much form and gravity, I would reply that all persons applying for membership in the Christian Church are required to give evidence that they have passed from death unto life—been regenerated by exercising repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Unitarians do not believe in conversion as the Christians understand it and teach it; believing Jesus Christ a mere man, they do not pray to Him, nor do they think that they are required to have faith in Him, in order to their salvation, consequently, an intelligent Unitarian in sentiment, would not apply, and could not be received in the Christian Church South with their present platform of principles. As well might one expect to obtain membership in the Baptist Church without immersion, as to obtain membership in the Christian Church without a change of heart through faith in Jesus Christ the Divine Redeemer of man. I have never heard of but one man in the Christian Church South, who held Unitarian sentiments touching the character and nature of Christ; that man was Rev. Willis Reeves, of North Carolina, referred to by Mr. Paris on the 30th page of his book, and he was cut off from the fellowship of the church. This was, perhaps, more than thirty years ago.

But Mr. Paris would make the world believe that he has a holy horror against receiving Anti-Trinitarians into the

church, that is, persons who reject the doctrine of the Trinity as presented in the creeds of the day, but still hold to the Divine character of Christ. Let me state a few facts. About 1845, an intelligent gentleman connected with the Christian Church at Providence, near Norfolk, on account of a personal matter, withdrew from that church and applied for membership in the Methodist Protestant Church in Norfolk. When the application was made, he candidly told the minister in charge, one of the most pious and prominent ministers of that denomination in Virginia, that he could not believe the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in their creed, but in other respects he could conform to the usages of the denomination. The minister replied, "Br. H——, great and good men differ on this subject, and all acknowledge it a mystery; we can, and will receive you, and allow you to have your own opinions on this subject." The church at Providence is set down by Mr. Paris, on page 36 of his book, as a Unitarian Church. The gentleman referred to, had long been a member of that church, had been raised up under the ministry of Rev. Mills Barrett, and held the precise views taught by Rev. W. R. Stowe and Rev. M. B. Barrett, so much condemned by Mr. Paris, and yet he was received a member of the Methodist Protestant Church in Norfolk, and soon after became an official member of the church, and never did change his views in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity. When necessary, the names of all the parties referred to above will be given.

In 1846, the first year of my ministry, I was aiding the pastor of this same church at Providence in holding a protracted meeting, and three or four of the most prominent ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church in Virginia,

greatly to my surprise, attended the meeting, and being invited, preached to good acceptance. A prominent layman of the church, who accompanied them, sought a private interview with me, and proposed to me to come over to the Methodist Protestant Church, stating at the same time, that with my influence, he thought that church would come over to them also, farther stating, that the object which his ministering brethern had in visiting the church, was to get the members of the church to unite in a body with the Methodist Protestant Church. The spirit in which the proposition was spurned, and the rebuke which I gave him, made him ever afterward shun my company.

I mention these circumstances to show the inconsistency of Mr. Paris, and those who sustain him in this controversy. Providence is declared by them a Unitarian Church, but they would gladly have received the church with all its Unitarianism, and did receive a member of the church without any change in his sentiments. Oh! consistency, thou art indeed a jewel.

One other fact I must be permitted to give. Much has been said by Mr. Paris and others against Rev. M. B. Barrett of Norfolk, who has been the text in the charge of Unitarianism against the Christians. In November, 1859, Rev. M. B. Barrett resigned his pastoral charge of Providence Church in Norfolk county, and was for a few weeks without any regular work in the ministry. He was somewhat depressed in spirit on account thereof, and about this time he was approached by members of the Methodist Protestant Church and invited to join them, and they would give him a field of labor at once, and an influential minister of that denomination, said to him, "We would be very glad to receive you." I have Rev. M. B. Barrett's permission to use this fact.

What will a discerning public think of this? Comment is unnecessary.

Again I press the question. Does the Methodist Protestant creed receive and hold Anti-Trinitarian doctrines as it does Trinitarian doctrines? Mr. Paris can answer with the foregoing facts before him.

Again, I would like to ask Mr. Paris if Unitarianism is considered by him and his brethren any greater heresy than Universalism? On the trial of a minister of the Methodist Protestant Church on the Smithfield circuit in Virginia in 1859, it "was proven," according to the report of the committee, that the accused had, "on a number of occasions and in the presence of a number of persons, called in question the doctrine of the endless punishment of the wicked," and the committee, with these facts before them, decided it "inexpedient to lay any disability upon him, earnestly hoping that for the future he would be more prudent and guarded in the expression of his opinion." Rev. John Paris was one of the committee that sat upon this trial, and to the report from which I quote, his name, with three other ministers, is appended.

I do not introduce this fact, or the others preceding it, for the purpose of "carrying the war into Africa," as John Paris so pompously says of his attack upon the Christian Church, but to show the glaring inconsistency of those who condemn in others the very things which they practice themselves. There is a spirit of liberality manifested in the action of the Methodist Protestant Church in the cases above cited, which I rather commend than otherwise, but while such a course is pursued, I most sincerely hope that the Christians will be allowed to do the same things without the everlasting cry of heresy against them.

*X Reference internal  
knowledge & feeling  
Statement implied at  
Unitarian*

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Reply to Letter No. 4.

The 4th letter of Mr. Paris, appeared in the Methodist Protestant of Nov. 5th, 1859.

In his first paragraph, he thinks the Christians do well to renounce the name "O'Kelleyites since they have repudiated his doctrine." Not so, Mr. Paris. They have not repudiated any position taken by Mr. O'Kelley at the commencement of his reform. Unlike many other denominations, however, the Christians are not bound by any man-made creed and they may believe or not believe the doctrines taught by James O'Kelley, as their judgment or conscience may dictate to them. It so happens, however, that in nearly all points the Christians still hold the doctrines advocated with so much ability by Mr. O'Kelley.

In the second paragraph, a pamphlet published by Mr. A. S. Foreman, of Norfolk Co., Va., in 1829, is referred to. This pamphlet professes to give the doctrines held by the church planted by Mr. O'Kelley, and declares that they are the same in reference to the doctrines of the Trinity as those held by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Foreman was a Trinitarian and wrote on his own responsibility.

Next, a pamphlet published by Rev. W. R. Stowe, in 1844, is introduced and several extracts made from it, to show that he is a Unitarian in sentiment, none of which meets the point or establishes the position aimed to be established by them. I am under no responsibility to endorse

or reject the doctrine contained in Mr. Stowe's pamphlet, entitled "Sound Doctrine." Mr. Stowe was a minister and a member of the "New York Western Christian Conference," who came to Virginia and preached with much success for three or four years and then removed back to New York. In the exercise of his God-given right,—a right guaranteed to him by the platform of principles adopted by the Christians, he published his opinions concerning God, His Son and the Holy Spirit in the pamphlet referred to, and for those opinions he alone was responsible. He wrote it, had it printed, paid for its printing, and sold it or gave it away of his own accord, no one else having any hand or interest in it. Mr. Paris says, "it contained as odious heresies as ever Dr. Priestly uttered," but his extracts failed to make the assertion good; and he further says, it is a "Unitarian production," and the author a "red hot Unitarian." All of which I assume the responsibility to deny. Dr. Priestly taught that "Jesus Christ was only a man." The Unitarians generally believe that Jesus was "a created, dependent being," and that "His existence commenced when he was born of Mary." Does Mr. Stowe teach this odious heresy? Does he teach, in his pamphlet, that Jesus Christ is a created, dependent being? Does he say that the Son of God is but a mere man. I let him speak for himself. On page 28 of his pamphlet, and in summing up his views on this point, he says:

"The doctrine here advocated is, there is one God, Eternal, self existent and Almighty, who is but one person, the Father; equal in every respect to all that is believed by others of the three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, except the human nature of the Son; and instead of a human nature, one Lord Jesus Christ, *not a man, not an*

*Angel, not a created being, but greater, higher, far above any being that God ever created; who was truly begotten of the Father, who proceeded and came forth from God, partaking of the nature of the Father, by whom he was begotten."* *Is that Unitarian doc?*

I ask that the above extract may be read with care as it embodies the substance of all that is contained in the pamphlet from which it is taken, and against which so much has been said and written. Is the doctrine here taught Unitarian? Did Dr. Priestly ever utter such sentiments? Mr. Stowe says in the above extract, that Christ was not a man, was not created and was of the same nature with the Father. Is this Unitarian doctrine? I ask an answer from candid, unprejudiced readers. I have made the above extract and comments not because I am bound to defend Mr. Stowe's Sound Doctrine, as he terms it, but to show the unfairness and injustice of Mr. Paris. The pamphlet contains some sentiments that I would not endorse, but it does not teach Unitarianism, in any part of it, and Mr. Paris has entirely failed, even in his garbled extracts to show that it does.

But should the public overlook this fact? A. S. Foreman a member of the Southern branch of the Christian Church, published a pamphlet, announcing himself a Trinitarian, and W. R. Stowe, a member of the Christian Church, North, published his sentiments, which in some points conflict with those advocated by Mr. Foreman, and straightway, John Paris, and other defamers charge the whole Christian Church with holding and propagating the objectionable views of Mr. Stowe, but give them no credit for the commendable doctrines held by Mr. Foreman. The truth is, the Church is not called upon to endorse

either the views of Stowe or Foreman, and for the peculiar views of these gentlemen it is not responsible.

But, Mr. Paris, in speaking of Mr. Stowe's little book, says, "It has come all the way down from Antioch Church in Isle of Wight county, and has taken its place on my table." Again, he speaks of it as coming "from Antioch Church." Why this? What had Antioch Church to do with the pamphlet? The reader shall see. I am, and have been for ten years, the pastor of Antioch Church, in Isle of Wight, and to fasten the objectionable doctrines taught in the pamphlet indirectly on me, is the object aimed at. But can this be done? The pamphlet was written in the vicinity of Norfolk, where Rev. Mr. Stowe was temporarily residing. It was dated at Norfolk and printed at the office of the *Norfolk Herald*. Antioch Church had no more to do with the publication of that pamphlet than John Paris did. I never saw or heard of it until I saw it in print. What a low, miserable attempt at injustice and misrepresentation!

The old story referred to in this letter about Mr Plummer's coming to the South, and his conversation with Mr. O'Kelley as reported by the notorious Leonard Prather, having been fully refuted in a previous chapter, is passed over in this.

Mr. Paris further asserts that the churches at "Providence, Cypress, Holy Neck and Antioch in Virginia" are among those who hold Unitarian sentiments. As these churches have replied to the vile slander, they shall be permitted to speak for themselves in another chapter and here I dismiss the 4th letter of Rev. John Paris.

## CHAPTER IX.

### Reply to Letter No. 5.

This, the last of the series, was published in the Methodist Protestant of Nov. 12th, 1859, and opens with the unfounded declaration that he had proved in the preceding letter that Rev. W. R. Stowe was a Unitarian. This I have clearly shown, in my review of that letter, not to be true, and pass the declaration by in this.

Addressing me he says:—

“I lay down the proposition that any man baptized by a professed minister of the gospel, known to be a Unitarian, by his writings and sermons, must be baptized into the faith of the Unitarians. Now, sir, since you have denied that Stowe was a Unitarian and created an excitement upon the question in different quarters, it is reported by respectable and reliable authority, men who know whereof they speak, that this same “W. R. Stowe,” the red-hot Unitarian, did baptize a large number of persons during the time he was laboring among “the Christian” churches in Virginia and Carolina; and furthermore, *that he did baptize or immerse*, several members of the Christian church, who were at the time acting as ministers and preachers of the church. I have the names of some of them, and I know of a certainty that at least two of them have been re-baptized since they commenced their ministerial career. I believe the report must be true of the others. I therefore propound the question to you before the religious world:—*Did you, or did you not, receive baptism at the hands of W. R. Stowe?* Come square up to the question and let us have a candid answer. From the similarity of doctrines held out and taught, I presume your young friend, Rev. M. B. Barrett, did at least. This is a question of momen-

tous importance, theologically. For Dr. Priestly, the father of the direful heresy in this country, never uttered a more truthful sentiment than he did when he laid down to Dr. Miller this proposition: "*If the doctrine of the Unitarians be not true, Unitarians are not Christians at all,*"—and I hold that if you, or any of your preachers or ministers, have been baptized by "W. R. Stowe," your ecclesiastical position is anomalous,—you have not been baptized by a Christian at all. Sir, I stir this question before your face in both States, and invite public attention to the same."

The above extract, taken from pages 41 and 42, of Mr. Paris' book, contains strange doctrine to me. Am I compelled to endorse the opinions of him from whom I receive the rite of baptism? If a preacher be a Calvinist in sentiment, cannot an Arminian in sentiment be baptized by him without becoming a Calvinist? If a minister is a Pedo-Baptist in sentiment, and baptizes one by immersion, (as is often done in Pedo-Baptist Churches,) does the person immersed necessarily become a Pedo-Baptist? The unsoundness of such reasoning must be apparent to all. What a profound logician and theologian this man, John Paris, is, in his own estimation!

Having laid down his premises, (false, however, as I have shown them to be,) he proceeds to lay violent hands on me, and prove, according to his own reasoning, that I am a Unitarian, by supposing that I received baptism at the hands of Rev. W. R. Stowe. Imagining all safe he raises himself in evident ecstasy and propounds a solemn question "before the religious world," and demands a "candid answer." Here is the question:—

"Did you, or did you not, receive baptism at the hands of W. R. Stowe?"

Mr. Paris shall have what he desires—a candid reply,

but it will be such an answer as he will not wish to hear. I did not receive baptism at the hands of Rev. W. R. Stowe. I was baptized in October, 1835, by that holy man of God, Rev. Burwell Barrett, who has long since passed from labor to reward. This was seven years before I ever saw Rev. W. R. Stowe, or he had ever set foot upon Virginia soil. And that he may be better posted in future he will allow me to say that Rev. M. B. Barrett did not receive baptism at the hands of Rev. W. R. Stowe, either.

But hear Mr. Paris in another paragraph, page 43 :—

“The famous Unitarian pamphlet sent down here from the office of the “Christian Palladium,” proposing “the union” which did afterwards take place between the “Christians” North and South, I shall pass over for the present, as I presume you are rather tired of Unitarianism at this time.”

Will not the reader be astonished when I inform him most positively, that there is not one sentence in the pamphlet referred to, that the most vigilant could construe as favoring Unitarianism—not a single sentence in reference to the Trinity or Unity, or any difference of opinion among Christians on that subject. And yet this is called a Unitarian pamphlet. Oh! Mr. Paris! Mr. Paris!! how can you write thus? Have you forgotten that you are a professed minister of the gospel of truth? May the Lord have mercy upon you.

I make one more extract from this last letter of the series :—

“Now, sir, don’t you attempt to insinuate, or to assert, as Rev. Mr. Barrett has done, that I charge the “Christian Church” with being Unitarian. I take it only as I have defined it to be, neither Trinitarian nor Unitarian; but I do *boldly and fearlessly* charge that it has tolerated and admit-

ted the heresy in her pulpits and among her ministers so long that she has become *particeps criminis*, so far as the propagation of the doctrine in Virginia and North Carolina is concerned. Let the Christian church now wash her hands of her doctrine. Let her do it officially, and then, like Cæsar's wife, she may stand above suspicion; but until then she must be content to wear the garment which she has cut for herself."

Taking the above side by side with what has preceded it in the five letters which I have reviewed, it does look strange, indeed. I am charged not to "insinuate or assert that he has charged the Christian Church with being Unitarian." Well! Well!! After laboring so hard to prove the Christians Unitarians and giving his book the imposing title, "Unitarianism Exposed as it exists in the Christian Church," and then to come out and ask me not to insinuate that he has charged Unitarianism upon the Christians.—On page 33, he says, "only a few" of the Christian ministers have propagated Unitarian sentiments, and now he tries to get out of the sin of bearing false witness against his neighbors by openly declaring that he does not believe what he has been trying to prove. Really! Really!! This caps the climax of inconsistency.

✓ I deny that Unitarianism has been "tolerated," or "admitted" among the Christians in the South. The only man that ever avowed himself a Unitarian in sentiment was cut off from the church. I refer to Rev. Willis Reeves, of North Carolina.

But the Christian Church is kindly admonished to "wash her hands" of this heresy, and to do it "officially." This has been done, and the reader shall see in the next chapter how Mr. Paris has treated it.

Ah! Mr. Paris, you have greatly wronged the Christians

in the course you have pursued toward them. You have sinned, sir,—grievously sinned, and unless you repent and wash your hands and conscience of the stain, it will become too black ever to be obliterated, either in time or eternity. I exhort you to repent, confess your error and seek the forgiveness of Heaven before it shall be everlastingly too late.

## CHAPTER X.

### Action of the N. C. and Eastern Virginia Conferences.

Having examined the five letters addressed to me through the columns of the Methodist Protestant, first, and afterwards published in a book, and shown most conclusively that they fail to establish the charge of Unitarianism against the Christians South, and having seen, after a labored effort to establish the charge, a partial withdrawal of it in the close of the last letter, I turn for a little time to show that what Rev. John Paris has advised the Christians in Virginia and North Carolina to do, has already been done. They have officially declared that the charge of Unitarianism against them is false.

During the summer and fall of 1859, the controversy between Rev. John Paris and myself was progressing in the Methodist Protestant and Christian Sun. Much interest was excited. Mr. Paris, as has been seen, charged the Christians with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments, and notwithstanding I positively denied the truth of the charge, as editor of the denominational paper, he stubbornly refused to withdraw his charge, and with a zeal, worthy of a better cause, labored hard to sustain the unsound position he had assumed.

The North Carolina Christian Conference convened in annual session at Union Chapel, Alamance county, N. C., on the 5th of October, 1859. The meeting was a full one, and during the session Col. R. D. Jones, a lay-delegate in the Convention, presented the following preamble and resolution:

“Whereas, certain ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church and others have recently, through the press and otherwise, slandered and misrepresented the Christians, South, and especially those residing in the bounds of this Conference, by charging them with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments, and their slanders and misrepresentations have been ably met and refuted by Elder W. B. Weltons, editor of the *Christian Sun*. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That we fully endorse the position taken by the editor of the *Sun* in the controversy with the aforesaid ministers of the M. P. Church and others, and that he has presented the true principles of the Christians, South, as held and practiced in the bounds of this Conference, and in all the other Christian Conferences, South, with whom we are acquainted.”

This preamble and resolution called forth remarks of commendation from several members of the Conference, and was adopted by a unanimous vote, all believing that a charge so unjustly made, and so stubbornly maintained, should be officially contradicted. On the very day in which this action was taken in the North Carolina Conference, Mr. Paris sent off from Portsmouth to Baltimore his last letter in which he advised the Christian Church to wash her hands of Unitarianism by official action. See page 45 of his book. A casual observer would have supposed that Mr. Paris, seeing the action of the Conference, would have rejoiced in it, but not so. I now turn to page 49 of his book, and in noticing this action, Mr. Paris says:

“The editor of the *Christian Sun*, not being able to meet the testimony arrayed against his position in connection with Unitarianism, paid a visit to the North Carolina Conference, which met at Union Chapel, Alamance county, October 5th, 1859, and either at his own instance or by his sympathizers, got the Conference to pass the following preamble

and resolution, and after quoting it in his paper, invites my attention to it."

To show how little Mr. Paris regards correctness in his statements, I would state that I knew nothing of the preamble and resolution until it was shown to me by Colonel Jones. It was not therefore offered at my "instance" or suggestion, but it was called forth by the general wish of the body. Col. Jones in writing me concerning the charge made by Mr. Paris, that I instigated the resolution, says— "Mr. Paris has uttered a falsehood." On page 58 of his book, Mr. Paris says Rev. Alfred Isely offered the preamble and resolution quoted. I mention this to show that he simply guesses at things, and records them as facts. Mr. Isely was not the author of the preamble and resolution, and had nothing to do with their preparation, but heartily endorsed them.

Let it be understood that the Annual Conferences of the Christian Church are composed of ministers and churches, the churches being represented by lay-delegates. The North Carolina Conference is the largest body of the kind in the South, and in a full meeting of ministers and lay-delegates, they unanimously declared that they had been slandered by ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church, who had charged them with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments. Moreover, the committee on periodicals, with Rev. Solomon Apple at his head, in their report to the Conference used this language:

"We heartily approve of the course pursued by our editor, Elder W. B. Wellons, in the Unitarian controversy, thinking that he has done good service to our cause in the exhibition of the truth."

This report was also received and adopted by a unani-

mous vote. And will anybody have the impudence after this to charge the members of the North Carolina Conference with holding and propagating Unitarian views? Yes, Rev. John Paris, of Portsmouth, Va., attempts to do it in the very face of this official denial. *One hundred and twenty-seven ministers and lay-delegates* in Conference assembled, by a unanimous vote, solemnly declare that they are not Unitarians in sentiment, and that those who have charged them with holding and propagating such sentiments have been guilty of slander, and John Paris, the Teacher of a District Public School in the town of Portsmouth, and a second rate minister of a respectable, but one of the smallest denominations in the country, rises up to dispute the Conference, and virtually tells them, “*I know better what you believe than you do yourselves*”—“*you are Unitarians in sentiment.*” Such impertinence and impudence will, and should receive the contempt and scorn of all honorable and intelligent men. To command patience to discuss any question with such a man, requires a considerable effort.

The “Eastern Virginia Christian Conference,” met at Providence, Norfolk county, Va., on the 2nd of November, 1859. Every minister connected with the Conference save one, was present, and every church was represented by lay-delegates. During the session, Rev. Wm. H. Boykin presented the following preamble and resolution :

“*Whereas, We have recently noticed with pain and regret that certain ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church, and others, have misrepresented and slandered the Christians South, charging them with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments, with a view of casting odium upon them in the eyes of the surrounding sects ; therefore,*

*Resolved*, That the editor of the Christian Sun has nobly defended his brethren against the charge, and we hereby endorse the positions he has taken, and declare the charge a gross misrepresentation and slander, and we advise him to continue to hold up to the public gaze those persons so misrepresenting us, and for such an unholy purpose, and we pledge ourselves to sustain him in his efforts to place the Christian Church in her true light before the public."

The preamble and resolution was passed without a single vote in the negative.

The committee on periodicals, Rev. S. S. Barrett, chairman, said, "The course pursued by the editor of the Sun in the recent Unitarian controversy meets our entire approbation."

This report was also adopted by a unanimous vote.

This Conference was composed of fifty-five members, clerical and lay-members, and with a united voice they said with "regret," they had "noticed" that "certain ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church and others," had "misrepresented and slandered" them by charging them with "holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments." They solemnly declared the charge "a gross misrepresentation and slander," endorsed the position taken in the controversy by the editor of the Christian Sun, and "advised him to continue to hold up to the public gaze" the slanderers.

After the advice given by Rev. John Paris to the Christians in Virginia and North Carolina on this very subject, one would suppose that it would have afforded him pleasure to correct his misrepresentations, and lay before the public the correction which justice, honor and truth united, to demand at his hands. But not so. Hear his comments from his book, pages 51 and 52:

“Mr. Wellons informs his readers that this resolution was adopted unanimously. But who were present and voted in this Conference? Ans. W. B. Wellons, Rev. Mills Barrett, who has preached the doctrine of the Holy Trinity for more than twenty-five years, according to the testimony of the citizens of the Isle-of-Wight county, in which he resides, Rev. M. B. Barrett, who declared over his own signature, when speaking of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, “the thing came forth an idiot,” and Rev. R. H. Holland, of whom it is said he took no pleasure in listening to old father Murphy preaching upon a certain occasion at South Keys, in vindication of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Besides these, delegates from all the churches that endorsed and sustained the red-hot Unitarian, W. R. Stowe.”

Yes, sir, I endorse the declaration that the Christians had been misrepresented and slandered, when they were charged with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments. The venerable Mills Barrett voted for the preamble and resolution with all his heart, and he occupies just the position on this subject that he did twenty-five years ago. He is not now, and never has been a Unitarian in sentiment. Rev. M. B. Barrett, whom your denomination would have so gladly received, endorsed the declaration, and Rev. R. H. Holland, with every one of the fifty-five members of the Conference. The remark ascribed to Rev. R. H. Holland, is without any foundation in truth. I am authorized by him to say that he remembers no such conversation between himself and any other person, and that the whole thing is a fabrication without any mixture of truth in it.

On page 36, Mr. Paris says that the churches at Providence, Cypress, Holy Neck and Antioch were suspected of holding Unitarian sentiments. In this Conference all these churches were fully represented by lay-delegates, and with one voice they have pronounced the charge a slander.

The facts brought out in this chapter ought to be sufficient to satisfy all unprejudiced minds that Rev. John Paris has been guilty of gross *misrepresentation* and *slander*. The united voice of *one hundred and eighty-two* intelligent gentlemen forming two official religious bodies in the good old States of Virginia and North Carolina, stand forth as witnesses to the fact. With united hand they have written SLANDERER upon the forehead of the author of the little catch-penny publication, bearing the imposing title, “*Unitarianism exposed as it exists in the Christian Church,*” &c. Verily, a popular Publishing House in Baltimore, never issued a dirtier work than this same publication.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Rev. Mr. Paris's "Addenda."

I shall take up the different points in the "Addenda" of Mr. Paris, which makes up twenty-five pages of his book, without any regular system, having already noticed one or two points in it in the preceding chapter. The twenty-five pages over which I have yet to pass, is a complete budget of blunders, misrepresentations, and slanders. This I intend to show every candid reader, who will accompany me in the review.

#### LEONARD PRATHER'S STATEMENT.

In referring to the statement of this notorious individual, which I have proved to be without the shadow of truth in it, he says, on page 48 :

"I carried this same document to two ministers, whose names are now on record on the journal of the N. C. Conference of the Christian Church, both of them by many years the seniors of Mr. Wellons, and asked them their opinion of its truthfulness. The eldest replied "*it is truth*"; the other made no answer to my question. This document then has gone the rounds among "Christians" and many other denominations, for thirty-one years, before one note of contradiction was ever heard; and that note was sounded by the veritable W. B. Wellons."

When this statement was first made in the Methodist Protestant, so improbable did it seem that any Christian minister could ever have received it as truth, that I called upon Mr. Paris, for the name of the man who declared it

was truth, but no name has been given. He must pardon me for expressing a serious doubt that any such man ever existed. The name must be given and the minister appealed to, before I can believe one word of it. The “Mutual Rights” in which *it is said* Prather’s statement first appeared was never seen, I presume, by any Christian minister. Paris’ History of the Methodist Protestant Church in which it was copied, was like its author, so obscure, until recently, that it never, I presume, attracted the attention of any member of the Christian Church, who supposed it worthy of notice. Until last year I had never heard of any such publication. This is the reason the falsehood lived to be so old, before it was exposed.

#### THE POPLAR NECK STORY.

On the same page from which the foregoing quotation is taken occurs the following :

“I will here remind Mr. Wellons, that if the history of a Church trial once held at Poplar Neck, in this county, were published, both he, and *one of his friends*, would be rather modest in talking about an advertisement of the N. C. Conference.”

In this extract, Rev John Paris, stands out in his true character as a defamer. Will not the reader be surprised, when I affirm, that I never was at Poplar Neck, in Norfolk county,—have never seen any member of that church, to my knowledge—know nothing whatever of any church trial even held at that place, and never could have been in the most remote degree, connected with any such trial, nor do I know, or have I ever heard, that any “friend” of mine was ever connected with any such church trial. The in-

direct charge against me, or the insinuation, is wholly a fabrication that could have proceeded only from a heart black with corruption.

REV. JOHN N. MANNING.

In noticing the action of the North Carolina Conference, declaring that the charge against the Christians of "holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments" is a slander, Mr. Paris says on page 50 :

"This same Conference ordained to the office of Elder a young preacher, by name, J. N. Manning, who was brought up religiously, if I am not mistaken in his history, at or near the Christian Church, called Antioch, in Rockingham county, Va. ; a church which I shall bring to the reader's notice before I close. This young minister was appointed a messenger to the Eastern Virginia Conference which was to meet a few days afterwards. He took the route to Conference by way of Richmond and James River ; and the first action I find this young epistle of the North Carolina Conference, sent out to be read and known of all men, the ink on his credentials of ordination but just dried, is a spirited controversy on board the steamboat with a couple of clergymen, one an Episcopalian and the other a Methodist on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and in true Unitarian style, stubbornly denying the truthfulness of the same. This fact I had from the Rev. Mr. Coffman, of the Virginia Conference, one of the ministers in question, whose veracity no man will doubt. Surely the North Carolina Conference had glory enough for one session. They ordained a Unitarian to the office of the ministry, and declared, by resolution, that "certain ministers of the Methodist Protestant Church and others, had slandered the Christian Church by charging them with holding and propagating Unitarian sentiments." Who will complain of these things?"

The effort so maliciously made in the above paragraph, to injure the character and usefulness of a pious and successful

young minister of the Christian Church will prove powerless, when facts are placed side by side with the misrepresentations.

On his way to the last session of the Eastern Virginia Conference, and on a steamer, between Richmond and Norfolk, Rev. Mr. Manning was approached by a stranger who enquired if he was not a minister. Being answered in the affirmative, the stranger enquired, to what denomination he belonged. On being informed that he was a Christian minister, the stranger informed him (Mr. Manning) that he had heard the Christians called Unitarians. This led to the conversation referred to between him and the stranger, who it seems was an Episcopal clergyman. As Rev. Mr. Coffman's name was referred to, and Mr. Paris had given him as his author, I, by permission of Mr. Manning, addressed him a letter on the subject, and the reply to my letter of enquiry I here give:

NORFOLK CITY, Aug. 18th, 1860.

Elder W. B. WELLONS.—Dear Sir:—Yours of the 11th came to hand in due time. \* \* \* \* \* I shall now do but little more than answer your questions.

1st. “Did he (John N. Manning,) not tell you that he was not a Unitarian in sentiment?”

He said so to the Episcopal minister, I had no conversation privately with him upon this subject, that I remember.

2d. “Did he not tell you that he believed in the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ, but that he did not believe Christ the very and eternal God, and that the eternal Jehovah died upon the cross?”

He asserted the above when in conversation with the Episcopal minister, who endeavored to show him that his *assertion* and his *arguments* were at variance with each other.

Respectfully,

A. J. COFFMAN.

Now, look at the facts contained in the above letter and see if Mr. Paris acted honestly in introducing Rev. A. J. Coffman as a witness to prove Mr. Manning a Unitarian, and the inconsistency of the North Carolina Conference in ordaining him to the work of the ministry. Mr. Coffman says that Mr. Manning told the Episcopal minister in his hearing, and at the time referred to, that he was "*not a Unitarian in sentiment*,"—that he "*believed in the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ*." Is this Unitarian doctrine? Do the Unitarians believe in the pre-existence and Divinity of Christ? Mr. Paris knows they do not, and the authors he has quoted so often, in his book, show that they do not. In the face of these facts, for he must have known them, how could a lover of truth, as Mr. Paris ought to be, with "Rev." affixed to his name, on the title page of his book, write down, coolly and calmly, that the North Carolina Conference "ordained a Unitarian to the office of the ministry." The appeal to the Rev. Mr. Coffman was a most unfortunate one for my opponent, and the defamer of Rev. John N. Manning. If I occupied the position of Mr. Paris, in this case, I should most certainly never want to hear anything said about Rev. A. J. Coffman and Rev. John N. Manning any more. The recollection of these circumstances would so harass my conscience as to make me wish to forget all who were in any way concerned in them.

#### REV. I. N. WALTER'S MEMOIR.

The following extract, from page 53, of his book, embraces the serious charge brought against me of selling and recommending a Unitarian publication, and for which, in the estimation of Mr. Paris, I should be numbered with

heretics, and power given a man of his spirit would burn me at the stake. But to the extract:—

“I now charge, that W. B. Wellons has advertised from time to time, during the past year, a Unitarian book for sale;—a book in which the paramount doctrine, standing above all others;—and time after time presented to the reader; and of which the subject of the book is more than twice or thrice brought forward as its champion—is Anti-Trinitarianism. This book is the memoir of Rev. I. N. Walter. And the advertisement of this book is to be found at the head of the editorial column of the Christian Sun. But I proceed in the next place to make a still graver charge. I charge that W. B. Wellons, the endorsed hero of the two conferences, did publish this same Unitarian book in the catalogue of books which he recommended for the study of young men preparing for the Christian ministry, in the Christian Sun of October 7th, 1859.”

What are the facts? I am the General Book Agent of the Southern branch of the Christian Church, but the arrangements of the Publishing Committee not being yet complete, I am keeping and selling a few books on my own responsibility, among them the “Memoir of Rev. Isaac N. Walter,” a minister of the Christian church, who lived and died in Ohio. In October, 1859, I was called upon to recommend a course of study for young men preparing for the work of the ministry, and under the head of miscellaneous reading I placed the Memoir of Walter along side of the Memoir of another distinguished minister of the Christian church who lived and died in New York. I wanted young men of the church, preparing for such an arduous work, to see something of the labors and toils of the pioneer preachers of the different denominations, in different sections, and in the life and labors of Isaac N. Walter and Joseph Badger, much might be seen of

ministerial labors, especially among the Christians. These Memoirs were not recommended as "Text Books," as Mr. Paris has it, but for miscellaneous reading. I also have this book on hand, now, for sale. Mr. Paris says one has found its way to his table. Strange that he did not say it came "from Antioch."

This book is called a Unitarian publication. I propose now to examine into the truth of this assertion. And first I would say that I was intimately acquainted with Rev. I. N. Walter, when he was living—have traveled with him and heard him preach scores of times—have met him in conferences, conventions, and in the social circle, at his house and at mine, and at the houses of our friends. *I know what his sentiments were, and I know that he was not a Unitarian in sentiment*, according to the definition given by the authors quoted by Mr. Paris, himself, to show what Unitarianism is. On pages 61 and 62, a part of the "Addenda" of Mr. Paris, he quotes learned authors who declare that a Unitarian "is one who denies the doctrine of the Trinity and ascribes Divinity to God the Father only," "one of a sect allowing Divinity to God the Father alone." I accept this definition and by it will show that he has falsely accused I. N. Walter. The first point introduced by Mr. Paris is what Mr. Walter gave as a reason for leaving the Methodist church, after being received on probation at the time of his conversion, then a mere boy. Says he, "the doctrine of the Trinity as set forth in their articles of faith on that subject perplexed me; as it is in my judgment opposed to the Unity of God and sonship of Christ, so clearly taught in the Scriptures." Does this constitute a Unitarian? Are not thousands perplexed with the articles of faith in the Methodist Discipline? Are all

Defiant Unitarianism  
accepted by Melrose.

these Unitarians? Have we not heard, all our lives, that the subject is a mystery? And because young Walter could not understand how God could be "without body or parts," and yet "three persons" and his mind was "perplexed" about it; was he a Unitarian? Does not his biographer say of him that he went into the Christian Church because there he would not have to say he *believed* a thing which he *could not understand*! This practice of setting down every man as a Unitarian who cannot understand and consequently rejects the teaching of men-made creeds upon this subject is all wrong—wrong in principle—wrong in every way.

When Mr. Walter became a minister he was frequently attacked by men holding to the teachings of the creeds, because he rejected them and was supposed to be heterodox in his sentiments, and he was forced to defend the position he had taken, and the extracts from his Memoir, quoted on pages 54 and 55, of Mr. Paris' book, are only accounts of encounters which he had in different places with those who opposed him.

But Mr. Paris quotes from page 383, of Walter's Memoir, an account of his being present at a Unitarian convention, held in Louisville, Ky., in 1854, and his notice of a report presented to that body. Mr. Walter says:—

"The report was an able and well prepared document, setting forth the unity of God, the Sonship of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, precisely as held by us as a people, boldly declaring the doctrine of the Trinity not in the Bible, and had no foundation in common sense. The report was friendly and ably discussed; all, however, speaking in its favor, and was finally adopted by a unanimous vote. It will soon appear in print, and I speak for it a faithful perusal."

This is supposed to teach Unitarianism, but I am unable to see it, and being at the house of Mr. Walter soon after he had been present at the meeting referred to, and having conversed with him freely on the subject, I know he did not intend to convey the idea that the Christians occupied Unitarian ground. He simply says that the report presented by Rev. Mr. Elliot, Rev. Mr. Hayward and Judge Pyrtle set forth the doctrines held by him and those of his brethren holding similar sentiments. This was all. If I say that a Baptist minister preaches a sermon containing sentiments precisely like those held by the Christians, on some point, does that make me a Baptist? Certainly not. Mr. Walter approved the sentiments in the report referred to, but not because they were Unitarian, but they were his own sentiments and the sentiments of his brethren in the West. ✓

There is no evidence in the Memoir or any of the writings of Mr. Walter, that he denied the Divinity of Christ—that he ascribed Divinity to God the Father only. Not a particle. But he always firmly believed that Christ was Divine in his nature and character and in this was one with the Father, but he did reject the doctrine of “three persons” in “one God without body or parts.” I design to be candid in my reply to Mr. Paris’ strictures, for it is not in my nature to be otherwise. Mr. Walter was not a Trinitarian in sentiment, nor was he a Unitarian in sentiment. He held views peculiar to himself, on this disputed subject. On some particular points we always differed, but I loved him none the less because of our difference in sentiments. The difference between him and myself and between him and Trinitarians, was really less than is often found between Trinitarians themselves, for scarcely two Trinitarian authors

in the land are agreed in every point, and this Mr. Paris *knows to be true.*

But suppose I do sell this Memoir and recommend young men preparing for the Christian ministry to read it, does that compel me to endorse every sentiment contained in it? Whoever heard of such a thing? The Editor of the Methodist Protestant, who is the General Book Agent of the denomination with which Mr. Paris is unfortunately connected, has standing constantly in his paper this notice under the head of "Books Just out."

*"All the books noticed in our review department may be had on order at the Book Rooms."*

In his last issue I find a notice of the "Edinburgh Review." Does any one suppose that in offering to furnish his patrons with this publication he thereby endorses every sentiment contained in it? I pick up an older number of his paper, and find a notice of the Sermons of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. This book he proposes to sell to the patrons of the "Book Room." Does he therefore endorse the Calvinism of Mr. Spurgeon, so prominent in all his sermons? Does he endorse the abolition sentiments contained in some of them? Nobody ever supposed for a moment that he did. Again, Dr. Reese keeps constantly on hand, at the "Book Room," in Baltimore, the Commentary of Dr. Adam Clarke. Dr. Clarke denies the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ. Is Dr. Reese with him in sentiment? I opine not. Nearly all the Methodists in this country differ with Clarke on this subject, and according to the reasoning of Mr. Paris Dr. Clarke ought to be set down as a Unitarian. But understand me, this is not *my* opinion.

I think every unprejudiced mind will at once see that the attempt of Mr. Paris to hold me responsible for the sentiments contained in every book that passes through my hands, is in every way unjust. But Mr. Paris goes farther than this, and on page 57, attempts to show, because I publish the Christian Sun, as Agent of the Southern Christian Convention, that the denomination is responsible for my acts, and not only am I responsible for the sentiments contained in every book I sell, but the denomination is responsible through me, and by endorsing me as their editor, they endorse the sentiments contained in the books I sell. This truly caps the climax of false reasoning. I have purchased Clarke's Commentary and Barnes' Notes for young men preparing for the ministry. Did any one ever suppose that I thereby endorsed the sentiments contained in both? On some points of doctrine these two authors contradict each other. Do I, or can I, endorse both? The whole thing is an absurdity.

But when I look at facts, and compare them, I am strongly inclined to turn with disgust from the consideration of this whole subject. Rev. Isaac N. Walter was one of the most useful and successful ministers that any denomination ever had in this country. He traveled more, preached more, wrote more and visited more families than any man of his age. Revival after revival followed his labors, and thousands upon thousands were born to God under his ministry, and when his last trial came he exclaimed to friends around his dying bedside, "I am now going to my reward:" invited all around to "see in what peace a christian can die." His last words were "Not a pain, not a doubt, not a cloud shades my mind. Bid all my friends farewell." Scarce had the words escaped his lips when he ceased to breathe,

and his freed spirit was with the Lord. And only four years after his triumphant death, *John Paris*, a professed minister of Christ, a man scarcely known out of sight of the smoke ascending from his own chimney, and if he has ever accomplished any good in the work of the ministry the world has yet to find it out, rises up to pronounce the great, the good, the sainted Walter, “*a Unitarian*”—“*a red-hot Unitarian*,” and to condemn me for selling his Memoir, and recommending young men to read the history of his life and labors. My mind sickens with the contemplation of such disgusting and absurd conduct and I turn from it.

#### BAPTISM OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.

On pages 58 and 59, Mr. Paris notices the baptism of Rev. A. Isely and Rev. G. G. Walker, by Rev. I. N. Walter, and says :

“I now raise a candid question. *Has a Trinitarian ever been known to seek baptism at the hands of a Unitarian?* Who will give me an answer to this question? I pause for a reply.”

I have never known any Christian minister, in the South or elsewhere, to seek baptism at the hands of a Unitarian. The ministers whose names are given above, were baptized by Rev. Mr. Walter, *but not by a Unitarian*. They knew Mr. Walter was not a Unitarian, and so does John Paris know that he was not a Unitarian. The argument to prove that Messrs. Isely and Walker endorsed the sentiments of Mr. Walter, because they received baptism at his hands is simply ridiculous. This argument has been fully met in chapter IX.

## MILLARD'S HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIANS.

Allusion is made, by Mr. Paris, to the history of the Christian Church, prepared by Rev. David Millard, for Winebrenner's "History of all Religious Denominations," and an attempt made to show the Christians, Unitarians.—Will not the reader be surprised to know that the article following Mr. Millard's, from the pen of Rev. James Williamson, meets and refutes the charge of Unitarianism, and that Mr. Paris makes no allusion to it. But I will be charitable enough to suppose that he had one of the first edition of Winebrenner's History, in which the article of Mr. Williamson did not appear. It is asserted, by Mr. Paris, that the Meadville Theological School is owned by the Christians and Unitarians, united. In this he is again wrong. It is wholly a Unitarian institution, Rev. David Millard is Professor of Biblical Antiquities and Sacred Geography. For accepting this position he was blamed by many of his Christian brethren, and none more than Rev. W. R. Stowe, who Mr. Paris dubs so often as a "red-hot Unitarian." The truth is, Mr. Stowe has always been, and is now, warmly opposed to the Unitarians, and has done as much as any living man to keep Unitarianism out of the Christian Church, North. This fact is known to all the Christians, North and South, and shows the great injustice done him by Mr. Paris.

## THE CHRISTIAN PSALMS.

In noticing the Hymn-Book mostly used, at present, by the Christians South, Mr. Paris says :

"I have made an attentive examination of this book. It is compiled by Mr. Hazen, and contains 1,159 hymns.

Fifty-five of these hymns are on the character of Christ; but not one of them asserts his divinity. Twenty-three of these hymns are found under the head, "Close of Worship;" but in none of them is the doctrine of the Holy Trinity set forth, *and in no part of the book can any thing like a doxology be found*; and it is just such a book as is adapted to the doctrine and worship of Unitarians."

A young man aspiring for some notoriety, and who was willing to receive it even at the expense of being kicked, first introduced the hymn-book question in the Methodist Protestant. In my reply to him, I most positively denied that there was a sentiment peculiar to the Unitarians in any one of the 1,159 hymns found in the collection of Rev. Jasper Hazen, and challenged him or any one of his aiders and abettors to produce *one*. Not one was ever produced. But Mr. Paris says of the fifty-five hymns on the character of Christ, "not one of them asserts his divinity." Now, nearly every one of these hymns are found in all the Methodist hymn-books in the land, and the very hymn from which Mr. Paris quotes on the 72d page of his book, in describing the Divinity of Christ, is found under this head in the Christian hymn-book. He concludes by saying, "it is just such a book as is adapted to the doctrine and worship of Unitarians." Then the Methodist Protestant hymn-book must be adapted to the worship of Unitarians also, for more than two-thirds of the hymns in the Christian hymn-book are found there. This is the silliest part of all Mr. Paris' strange production, and must have been admitted to please *John L. Michaux*, the weak young man referred to above, and without examination. There is not a book in the whole country freer from any thing *resembling* Unitarianism than Hazen's Christian Psalms. The statement, therefore, that it is suited to Unitarian worship, is *false* in

its conception, in its purpose, and in its consummation. The thousands of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians all over the country, who are accustomed to join with the Christians in singing to the praise of the Divine Redeemer, from Hazen's Christian Psalms, will all join to proclaim Mr. Paris a false witness on this point.

### MR. PARIS' "ARGUMENT."

I see but one point in this but what has already been fully met, and that is his denial that a man may be an Anti-Trinitarian, that is, not believe the creed on this subject, and yet not be a Unitarian. As this point will be noticed in a succeeding chapter, I shall give no farther attention to it in this.

### "RESPONSIBILITY."

Under this head Mr. Paris attempts to prove that the Christian Church should be held accountable for every sentiment advanced by her ministers on their own responsibility. He wholly misapprehends, or else he desires to wholly misrepresent the position occupied by the Christians. *Character* and not mere *opinion*, is their test of fellowship. An applicant for membership in the church is not questioned upon disputed points of doctrine, but is only required to give evidence that he has been regenerated by exercising repentance and faith. On minor questions he is left free to exercise his own right of private judgment. Ministers are no more bound or cramped than private members. Before ordination they are expected to endorse the Christian platform, one item of which is, "the right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience—the privilege and duty

of all." He is farther required to give evidence of a Divine call to the work, and to show that he is capable of teaching to acceptance. *This is all.* He may believe in baptism by immersion or sprinkling, in adult or infant baptism, and as he believes so may he teach and practice. The church is responsible for his moral character and christian deportment, but no farther. This is well understood by the Christians every where. But Mr. Paris has determined not to have it so, and has constructed a new platform for the Christians to stand upon, which is rejected by every member of the denomination. And how strangely he acts. He finds Rev. W. R. Stowe and Rev. M. B. Barrett teaching doctrines which he thinks may be twisted into heterodoxy, and straightway he declares the Christians have ordained these men; are responsible for their teaching, and what they teach is the standard doctrine of the denomination; while in the same numbers of the papers from which quotations are made, Rev. John P. Lemay and others teach the doctrine of the Trinity, but their sentiments are overlooked. Verily, there never was a more one-sided man than this same John Paris.

#### THE CHRISTIAN SUN.

Mr. Paris quotes from a number of the Sun published in 1860, an editorial of mine, stating that "the Sun is not an individual enterprize but a denominational paper," and then from the heading of the paper, stating that it is published by the "Southern Christian Convention" with "W. B. Wellons, Editor, and Publishing Agent," with three corresponding editors, an editorial council of three, and an executive committee of six, to show that the Christians South are responsible for whatever appears in the columns

of the paper. And then he goes back to 1849 and 1851, and makes quotations from the Sun, and holds me responsible for them, and consequently the body from whom I hold my appointment as editor. See page 67. But he should have known that in 1849 and 1851, there was no "Southern Christian Convention." I was not at that time editor and publishing agent of the Sun, and of course, all his labored effort to establish responsibility where none existed, falls to the ground. Such a blunder as this does not speak well for the judgment of my opponent. I hope Mr. Paris is a temperance man, for really such a blunder as this would seem to emanate from a man not always himself.

The anecdote related by Mr. Paris, page 71, is destitute of point, and shows the lack of good breeding, so apparent in every thing emanating from his pen.

#### MR. PARIS' CONCLUSION.

The concluding chapter of this strange little publication, commences thus :

"Go, little book, make your visit throughout Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and don't forget to visit Missouri, where you have been so early and kindly invited. Go, carrying in your pages an antidote for Unitarianism."

In this extract the reader is informed that his book has been "early and kindly" invited to "Missouri," and it is directed to go there, carrying in its pages "an antidote for Unitarianism." Would the readers of this reply like to know by whom the invitation was so "early and kindly" given—who in Missouri felt so much interest in propagating the slanders of Mr. Paris? I am prepared to inform

them. It was an expelled minister from the Christian Church at Antioch, Clay county, Mo., and from the "Missouri Christian Conference," who, to gratify a little revenge and give vent to his pent-up wrath against those who had spurned him from their fellowship, ordered a number of copies of Paris' slanderous book for distribution in that State, many of which were sent directly to Christians in that section. Let all the facts connected with this matter be known. At the annual session of the "Missouri Christian Conference" held in September, 1858, charges were preferred against Philip E. Gill, one of the ministers of the Conference, by the church at Antioch. These charges involved the veracity of the said Gill, inasmuch as he had declared that a part of the ministry and laity of that Conference had circulated books and a paper advocating Arian sentiments. This charge was proved to be false. And to fully test the falsity of the charge against the ministers, of that Conference, of holding Arian sentiments, a committee of intelligent laymen were appointed to examine into the faith of all the ministers of the Conference on this subject. This committee summoned every minister in the Conference before them, and in their report they say, "We find that they all believe in the Trinity, or the incomprehensible union of three persons in the Godhead as held by Methodists, Presbyterians and other orthodox churches." They farther reported P. E. Gill not in good standing. Whereupon the Conference took from him his license to preach. This is the P. E. Gill who was expelled from the denomination, and who "so early and so kindly" invited Paris' book to Missouri. It should also be stated that this same P. E. Gill came to the Christians from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was never a Christian in principle,

but for several years was numbered among them. Like Leonard Prather, he now seeks to destroy that which once he professed to be laboring to build up. Respectable men have in many places refused to touch Paris' book or read it after it was sent to them, and I have not yet been able to find in Eastern Virginia a single man who is willing to acknowledge himself an agent for its distribution.

Whatever may be said of the Christians elsewhere, Missouri is the last place where they should be charged with Unitarianism ; where every one of their ministers are known to be Trinitarians. Go on little book to Missouri, and you and Philip E. Gill may do your best to tarnish the good name of the Christians in that thriving State, but your efforts will be in vain. The more you work against them the more permanent will the principles of the Christians be established. Opposition from such a source cannot fail to benefit the cause of righteousness in the end.

## CHAPTER XII.

### Anti-Trinitarians.

VB  
Rev. Mr. Paris has labored hard throughout his book to prove that all who do not receive, believe and teach the doctrine of the Trinity as presented in his favorite creed, must, of necessity, be Unitarians. His ground is this: there are but two classes, Trinitarians and Unitarians, and every man must belong to one or the other, consequently, if a man rejects the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the Methodist Protestant Discipline, he must of necessity be a Unitarian in sentiment. Here lies his mistake. The premises assumed by him is unsound. His private creed has been too much magnified, and made too important. Before farther proceeding, it may be well to state that the terms *Trinitarian*, *Unitarian*, *Trinity* and *Unity* are not to be found in the sacred writings. No where in the Bible are such terms used. Then, according to the position occupied by Mr. Paris, we are compelled to believe a doctrine expressed by language not found in the Bible, and called by a name not in the Bible, or be forced into the ranks of another class whose doctrine is not expressed in Bible language, and whose name no where appears in the Scriptures. To the CHRISTIANS, whose cause I plead, this all seems wrong. They reject all names not found in the Bible as useless and injurious, consequently, they are known among themselves as *Christians* alone, and reject all other names. Having dissolved all connection with creeds formed by men, councils, conventions, conferences or other associations, and

taken the Bible alone for their rule of faith and practice, it should not seem strange if the words, "Trinity," "Trine," "Three one," "God the Son," "God the Holy Ghost," "three persons in one God," "Unity," and such like unscriptural phrases are seldom heard from their pulpits. But it should not be supposed because they thus dispense with unscriptural phrases, that they do not firmly believe in many of the doctrines or points of doctrine usually expressed by these unscriptural phrases. I know many members and ministers of the Christian Church in the South, who do not object to being known as Trinitarians, and as believers in the doctrine of the Trinity. In the preceding chapter, it was shown that on investigation, it had been found that every minister in the "Missouri Christian Conference" were Trinitarians in sentiment, and of course, they do not object to being known as believers in the doctrine of the Trinity. I know many members and ministers of the Christian Church in the South who object to being known as Trinitarians and as believers in the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the popular creeds of the day, because, say they, "the name is unscriptural, and the doctrine as presented in the creeds we do not understand." But they are not Unitarians, and solemnly protest against being called by that name, or to being understood as holding the doctrines generally taught by that denomination. They believe in God the Father, in Jesus the only begotten of the Father, in the Holy Ghost, the reprov-er and comforter, and that these three are in nature and power one. Can they be Unitarians with such sentiments? No intelligent man would dare assert that they are. I take the position, therefore, that a man may reject the doctrine of the Trinity as presented in the Methodist Protestant creed, and refuse to be

called a Trinitarian, and yet be as far from avowing Unitarianism as any avowed Trinitarian in the land. There is a middle ground, if I may be allowed the expression, which may be occupied by those who hold to the Bible as their only creed. This middle ground is occupied by those members of the Christian Church who are called by their opponents Anti-Trinitarians, and whom Mr. Paris wants so much to dub Unitarians. That the position of Mr. Paris is wrong, may be seen, when the fact is considered that Trinitarians are not agreed among themselves as to what constitutes Trinitarianism. Some teach that there are "three persons" in the Godhead; some three "modes of existence;" others three "differences," and others still three "contemplations." Some teach that Jesus existed eternally as a Son, and others hold that his Sonship commenced when he was born of the Virgin. Now, if Mr. Paris' position be correct, may not an honest person inquire which view of the subject must I take in order to avoid being a Unitarian? Suppose one believes in the eternal Sonship of Christ, he is, of course, a Trinitarian thus far, but suppose he occupies the position of Dr. Adam Clarke on this subject, and denies the eternal Sonship of Christ, is he therefore a Unitarian? Was Dr. Clarke a Unitarian? And yet it is known in this particular point, and not a very unimportant one either, he differed from the great body of Trinitarians in this country.

And what has been said of Trinitarians may also, in truth, be said of Unitarians. They are not agreed as to what constitutes Unitarianism. And yet some of the Unitarians of this country, following in the footsteps of their Trinitarian neighbors, are crying out that all who are not Unitarians must be Trinitarians. They are wrong also. Some

Adam Clarke's position? M. Paris' is the correct one?

Unitarians tell us Christ was but a mere man, and others tell us he was greater than man, but deny his Divinity. Some deny that Christ should be worshiped, or that prayer should be offered to Him, while others worship Him as in some way Divine in his character. To which party, may I ask, must one belong in order not to be numbered with Trinitarians?

But there is a scriptural ground, a scriptural faith outside of the creeds of either the Unitarians or Trinitarians. This medium ground between the two, can be received, believed and taught, and is in every way more satisfactory to free, independent thinkers. Members of a denomination, rejecting all creeds and taking the Bible alone for its rule of faith and practice, are not, and should not be held bound to receive and believe either the Trinitarian or Unitarian creed.

But to come more closely to the point of discussion as to whether a man can be an Anti-Trinitarian and not a Unitarian. I hold that an Anti-Trinitarian is not of necessity a Unitarian, and consequently, Rev. W. R. Stowe, Rev. M. B. Barrett and the lamented Rev. I. N. Walter, though Anti-Trinitarians, cannot, in truth, be called Unitarians. The reasoning will be clear. Let me illustrate: The creed of the Methodist Protestant Church says:

“There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

Now, suppose a man believes in the one living and true God, the maker and preserver of all things, and in his Son

Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are of one nature, substance, power and eternity, and yet does not believe, because he cannot understand how, *three persons* can exist in *one* God without *body* or *parts*—how *personality* existed without *body* or *parts*, is he therefore a Unitarian? This cannot be, because the Unitarians do not believe that God, his Son, and the Holy Ghost are one in nature, substance, power and eternity? And because he cannot see, and does not understand how *three persons* can exist without *body* or *parts*, and yet those *three persons* constitute but *one* person, must he be called a Unitarian? Must one who is bound by no denominational creed, and takes the Bible alone as his guide, be compelled to express himself in the language of a Trinitarian creed, or be numbered with the Unitarians? I can see no reason in such a course. The whole thing is wrong, and only wrong.

The second article of the creed already quoted says, that the Son who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the Virgin, so that two whole and perfect natures were joined together—the human and Divine, and died to reconcile God to us. Now, suppose one believes that Christ was the Word of the Father, and of one substance and nature with the Father, and that he took part of man's nature in the womb of the Virgin, and that the human and Divine nature were united in him, and that he died that man might be reconciled to God, and that through his blood alone all men may be saved. Is he a Unitarian because he does not use the exact words of the creed in expressing his faith? Because he does not believe that Christ should be called “the very and eternal God?” and that the very and eternal Jehovah died upon the cross

at Calvary? Such a conclusion is not based upon a sure foundation, and cannot, therefore, stand the test of reason.

A third article in the same creed says, the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son is of one substance, majesty and glory with the Father and the Son, the very and eternal God. Now, suppose one believes that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is of one nature with the Father and Son, but does not believe it scriptural or proper to speak of the Holy Ghost as the very and eternal God, is he a Unitarian? Surely not.

I have presented these suppositions and points of doctrine not because they embody the precise views of any individual or body of christians, but simply to show the absurdity of the effort to class all christians either with the Trinitarians or Unitarians. This point is clear to my mind, that a man may be an Anti-Trinitarian and yet not be a Unitarian, or an Anti-Unitarian and yet not be a Trinitarian. And this point must be clear to all who will thoroughly examine the subject.

The matter contained in this chapter is intended to show that the ground occupied by Rev. John Paris is untenable. All that he has shown is, that some members and ministers of the Christian Church South, have not, and do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity as presented in his creed—the Discipline of the Methodist Protestant Church, but that he has utterly failed to class them properly with the Unitarians, must be plain to all. This point gained, I shall be content to close this controversy, when one or two chapters of a personal character shall be added.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Opposition to Unitarianism.

“ Why are you so opposed to Unitarianism ? ” asked an honest enquirer. “ Why so sensitive on this subject ? ” says another. The reason must be plain.

For years past the Christians in the South, have been charged, in places where they were not known, with holding Unitarian sentiments, and by way of throwing odium upon them and preventing their success, they have been nicknamed Unitarians by their opponents. Where they have been *well* known it has not injured them, but where they have been but *little* known their usefulness has been seriously impaired by it, and in many places their way has been almost entirely hedged up by it. I always knew the charge to be untrue, and have ever regarded those instrumental in its propagation as possessing a persecuting spirit. But still I have felt inclined to cultivate peace and union with all christians, and hoped, after awhile, the slander would cease to be repeated. This feeling was also possessed by my brethren. Our silence and forbearance seemed to embolden our opponents, and instead of secret whisperings and private communications, they entered the columns of respectable newspapers and published us Unitarians, and even in books and one-sided histories of religious denominations, the Christians have been set down as belonging to the Unitarian family, and those who have been instrumental in having these things published, have afterwards appealed to them as proof of the charge. Forbear-

ance therefore ceased to be a virtue. I saw, I felt that my native love of peace and natural disinclination to controversy had to be overcome. Into the warfare I have plunged, and am determined to see the church of my choice set right before the reading world.

Do not tell me that I should have borne this persecution longer, in silence. Tell me not that my love of peace should have kept me silent until my good name was destroyed and my way to usefulness forever hedged up. I love peace, but not at the sacrifice of character; I am opposed to controversy in my feelings, but truth and justice must be maintained. I look back over the pages I have written and sympathize with the exposed slanderer, and those who have connected their fortunes with his, but just as I would with a convicted burglar, or a detected counterfeiter—sorry that he has committed the sin, but glad that the sin has been detected and exposed.

I am opposed to being numbered with Unitarians, because it is not the position I occupy. I am opposed to it, because it is to hinder my usefulness in the work of my Master. I am opposed to it, because it has heretofore been the most potent weapon which sectarian opponents have used against us, and for the future, come weal or woe, every man possessing the character of a gentleman, in the community in which he lives, who is guilty of representing the Christians, South, as Unitarians, Socinians, or Arians, in sentiment, shall be called to account for it. Every such person shall hang, side by side, with John Paris, the scorn and contempt of all lovers of virtue and truth.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### Conclusion.

I am unwilling to close this review without expressing regret that I have been forced to present my opponent in his true character before the public. This unpleasant task I would have preferred not to have engaged in. But necessity has been laid upon me, and I have shouldered the responsibility with as much grace as possible. It is sometimes necessary to regulate controversy with reference to the opponent one has to combat, and to answer some persons by Solomon's celebrated rule.

Toward the ministers and members of the Methodist Protestant Church, I have always entertained only the kindest feelings. With most of the ministers of that denomination in Virginia and several other States, I have a personal acquaintance. I have met them in the social circle, at the house of God, in private and in public. Our communion has been sweet. Many of them have occupied my pulpit, and I have frequently been invited to occupy theirs. We have lived in union and harmony, and so far as I am concerned, I am desirous of having the union and fellowship continued. Among the laity of the Methodist Protestant Church, are some of my best personal friends—those who know that the charges against me and the denomination I represent are untrue.

I can see no reason why any of the ministers or members of the Methodist Protestant Church should make themselves parties to this controversy, except those whose names have

been introduced and whose acts have been criticised. Mr. Paris made the attack first, in a book purporting to be a history of his own denomination, by going out of his way to state that the Christian Sun boldly advocated Unitarianism; his friend quoted his statement to prove the Christians in Virginia and North Carolina Unitarians. I denied the correctness of this statement, and defended the Christian Church, and it was to be expected that the members of the Christian Church would sustain me while engaged in their defence as well as my own. But the case of Mr. Paris is different. He was the aggressor, and the aggression was made on his own responsibility. I have not attacked the Methodist Protestant Church, but have defended the Christian Church. Here lies the difference. Looking at the subject in this, the true light, it is plain that those members of the Methodist Protestant Church who have made themselves parties to this controversy, have either mistaken their duty, or else they are influenced by personal ill-feeling toward me or the church which I have defended. Charity leads me to suppose the first is the case in most instances, and with the few who have been influenced by personal ill-feeling, I am ready to shake hands and part. If they go toward the East, I will go toward the West, or if they go toward the West, I will go toward the East. Let there be no strife between us in future.

For John Paris, I will earnestly pray that he may change his course of life, become a better man, repent of his errors and find the forgiveness of Him against whom he has sinned, by bearing false witness against his neighbor.

And here I am willing to lay down the pen and leave the whole controversy in the hands of an intelligent public.











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